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SCHISM AND UNITY

by

THE ABBOT OF DOWNSIDE

PROFESSOR GREENSLADE, in these Edward Cadbury lectures, has given us a study of schism, as distinct from heresy, 'in the early Church', and has related it 'to the situation of divided Christendom to-day'. This was an admirable plan. It gives a practical point to the historical reconstruction, while it enables us to judge contemporary problems in the light of past experience. An appendix gives a brief 'Synopsis of Schisms', but the lectures take the original course of taking various causes of schism, and illustrating their operation in early Christian history, and also the ways in which the early Church tried to deal with schism. For the purposes of this book, the 'early Church' covers approximately the period from Pentecost to A.D. 500. The Acacian schism is mentioned, but its termination is not described.

The book is an example of careful scholarship, and I do not think that there are many details in the historical narrative which invite disagreement. On p. 32 St Augustine, *c. Ep. Parmen II, 25*, is quoted for the doctrine that 'there is no just necessity for dividing the Church'. I entirely agree that St Augustine held this view, but I think that the passage referred to is dealing with the Donatists' claim that their particular schism was justified by the moral delinquencies of the Catholic clergy; to this Augustine replied that these delinquencies do not affect the validity of the bad clergy's sacramental ministry, so that (in the particular case of Donatism) there is no just necessity' etc. On p. 86 it is suggested that the Papal decretals, which 'begin' (Dr Greenslade means, I take it, that our surviving collections begin)¹ in the 380's, were expressions of the Pope's 'patriarchal authority over the west, and also made it clear that the basis of the authority was Rome's apostolicity'.

¹ Siricius, shortly after 380, in a decretal addressed to the bishop of Tarragona, speaks of 'general decrees sent to the provinces' by Liberius about twenty years earlier. There is no knowing how far back the practice of 'decretals' goes. P.L. 67, p. 232.

I think that the idea of the five patriarchs was originally Eastern and hardly found before 451. Rome had a kind of metropolitan jurisdiction over the 'suburbicarian' churches of Italy (see Chapman *Studies on the Early Papacy*, p. 11, n. 1), but in the decretal letters the Popes speak not as patriarchs but as inheriting the Petrine primacy over the whole Church.² It is said on p. 115 that 'believing in the juridical autonomy of bishops, he would not submit to an order or threat from Rome'. This is a reference to Cyprian's remark in an African council, that 'none of us makes himself a bishop of bishops', and presumably Dr Greenslade has in mind his famous and repeated dictum, that a bishop 'is responsible to God alone'. But Fr Bévenot, in his contribution to *Mélanges Lebreton*, has argued that the former phrase disclaims, for Cyprian himself, a dictatorship over the African council; and that Cyprian never uses the latter phrase to defend himself against Roman demands. It is clear that in practice, Cyprian held³ that bishops were bound by the conciliar decisions of their own region, and that therefore their 'juridical autonomy' was not complete. On p. 119 the view that the sacraments cannot be administered outside the Church is attributed to Cyprian 'and the still earlier Church generally'. This is perhaps going beyond what is known. Stephen regarded the acceptance as valid of schismatical baptism as 'traditional', and it may be that the other view was in fact the innovation: it will be remembered that Cyprian himself defends his view by arguing dangerously, that 'reason' is superior to 'custom'.⁴ On p. 156 the council of Sardica, 'forming a western council with but slight eastern representation', is stated to have had 'little if any constitutional right' (to depose Stephen of Antioch?). But this council seems to have regarded itself as being more than merely Western, as representing in fact the 'Catholic Church'; and no doubt it regarded the refusal of the Easterns to take part as a piece of wilfulness which could not avail to reduce the council to merely local rank. On p. 199 it appears to be stated that Innocent I 'did not approve' the Augustinian doctrine of the validity (*servatus*

² Cf. Siricius, loc. cit., p. 233: 'The above rule' as to when baptism is to be administered 'should be observed by all bishops who do not wish to be separated from the solidity of the apostolic rock on which Christ built the universal Church'.

³ Cf. *Ep. i.*

⁴ C. H. Turner, in *Early History of the Church and Ministry* (ed. Swete), 2nd ed. p. 154, doubts the antiquity of the Roman practice.

servandis) of schismatical sacraments; but Dr Greenslade's reference only seems to show that Innocent distrusted the *practice* of admitting schismatical clergy, on their reconciliation to the Church, to the exercise of their orders.

It will be seen that the above suggestions are mostly on points of detail. The historical sections are pleasantly and lucidly written, and the search for causes gives them a fresh and interesting light. There is one matter on which Dr Greenslade is clear and emphatic, and it may be one of the most important things in the book. He emphasizes that 'the Fathers, together with most early heretics and schismatics, were substantially agreed upon certain principles regarding the unity of the Church. It was held on biblical grounds not simply that the Church ought to be one, but that it is one, and cannot but be one. This unity was predicated of the visible Church, and the visible Church was thought of organically, as one structure, one communion . . . bodies separated from that communion were outside the Church' (p. 18). It is not merely that the Church is visible, and that it is one; as though these were two separable, if not separate, characteristics. But (and here I hope I carry Dr Greenslade with me, though I feel some doubt) the early Christians took it for granted that the Church militant is in its very nature, and therefore unchangeably, an actual and visible association of baptized persons in a state of probation; and it knew, as we know, that a dissociated association is as impossible as a square circle. An ordinary association cannot exist as two societies, though it may cease to exist altogether. The Church, too, cannot exist—so the early Christians held—as two independent societies; and its continuance till the end of history is guaranteed by divine promise and covenant.

Dr Greenslade's definiteness on this point puts him in agreement with C. H. Turner, who writes (*op. cit.*, pp. 194 f.) of the patristic period as follows: 'There was complete agreement as to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, the visible fellowship of the disciples, the Body of Christ: the separatist communities, at least from the middle of the third century onwards, had with the idea of the Church no quarrel: for the most part the *rationale* of their separate organization was that each set of them claimed to be the true embodiment of this unique society'.

If I sense a defect in Dr Greenslade's treatment of this matter, it is not as to the main fact, but with reference to the criteria whereby

the true Church might be known from spurious rivals. Very often, a simple appeal to the facts of contemporary history might seem sufficient. Thus, when Novatian claimed to be the authentic bishop of Rome, and that his communion was the true Church, Cyprian simply appealed to the fact that the existing hierarchy (virtually throughout the world had recognized as true bishop of Rome the other claimant, Cornelius. The same basic argument seems to be behind Irenaeus's contention (and Clement of Alexandria's) that the heretical bodies can only trace back their descent to post-apostolic founders. The same argument, that the whole Christian world outside Africa is against them, is used forcibly by Augustine against the Donatists. But already in the fourth century there had been the first ominous signs of the possibility of a large-scale schism between East and West which would make the above Cyprianic argument difficult of application. And already (I think) in Cyprian we see the early traces of another argument that received its classical expression in the Formula of Hormisdas. Dr Greenslade did not have to consider this Formula, since it comes from the early sixth century and he hardly looks beyond the end of the fifth century. The Formula was signed by Bishops, including the Bishop of Constantinople, who came to Catholic unity after having belonged to the Acacian schism; and it identified Catholic unity with communion with the See of Rome. To my mind, it is one of the most important documents in the history of the doctrine of the visible Church. It was not a mere 'flash in the pan', for it was signed again, after a period of about fifteen years, by no less a person than the Emperor Justinian. Nor was it an unheard of innovation. It is really implicit in the Council of Chalcedon's recognition (A.D. 451) that the Bishop of Rome was the head of the council, he to whom Christ had entrusted the guardianship of the mystic vine. It was the doctrine of Siricius in the decretal quoted in a footnote above. It was the doctrine of the Council of Aquileia in A.D. 381, and therefore presumably of Ambrose, a leading figure at that Council. The same doctrine is enunciated by Jerome, by Optatus (and by Augustine in his *Contra partem Donati*); and, as I have suggested, I think it lies on, or just below, the surface of Cyprian's writings.⁵ I think it should have been discussed more

⁵ I may perhaps refer to a book with the title *The Church and Infallibility* which I hope shortly to offer to the public.

SCHISM AND UNITY

explicitly by Dr Greenslade in his study of early schism and the early Church's attitude to schism. It is of course one of the two themes of Wiseman's celebrated articles in *The Dublin Review*.

I indicated at the beginning of this review that Dr Greenslade seeks to relate his historical studies to contemporary problems of Reunion and the aims of the ecumenical movement. He thinks that these aims may be realized, or at least pursued not without some hope of at least partial success, if the ancient idea of schism, as necessarily resulting in one of the resultant bodies being 'outside the Church', can be given up. And he seeks to persuade his readers to accept this surrender of the ancient belief in the necessary unity of the one and only Catholic communion as exclusively identified with the Church founded by Christ.

Before turning to his arguments on this matter, I hope I may without discourtesy point out the weight of the 'burden of proof' which he must necessarily undertake. Newman, in the days before his Anglo-Catholic convictions began to crumble, used to concede that the Roman Catholic Church could appeal with force to Universality against the local limitations of the Church of England; but he held that Antiquity, on the other hand, favoured the Church of England against the claims of 'Rome'. But Dr Greenslade frankly admits, as regards this crucial point of the nature of the Church, that Antiquity itself is practically solid against the view which he is advocating. And it is not only antiquity which he has to discard. He of course knows and admits that, on this point, the Roman Catholic Church stands with antiquity; and it has ever so stood. And he admits (p. 184) that modern 'Eastern Orthodoxy' similarly stands with antiquity, though of course differing from the Roman Catholic Church as to which communion is the true heir to Christ's promises.⁶

Now I know that a mere appeal to the 'big battalions' seems very unspiritual; and indeed we have no guarantee that even among Christians the majority will always be right against a minority. But there is, nevertheless, some presumptive weight in the fact that perhaps between threequarters and two-thirds of modern Christendom (reckoning by the numbers of adherents of the various

⁶ I think there has been some wavering on the part of some Orthodox theologians, but probably this has been due in the main to Protestant and liberal influences.

communions) hold the position which Dr Greenslade thinks ought to be surrendered.⁷ The weight of the figures is very greatly enhanced when it is recognized that the bodies in which the divisibility of the Church is frankly admitted all derive from a violent catastrophic break from tradition, the Reformation of the sixteenth century and almost all from one geographical area. And it is perhaps still more important that antiquity and the Middle Ages, with their fundamental belief in the principle surrendered by Dr Greenslade, stand across the communications of all of us with our base in Apostolic times. To Christian antiquity we owe the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds (and Dr Greenslade sets great store by these Creeds) and our Canon of New Testament scriptures (and Dr Greenslade holds that any denomination, if it wishes to claim to be within the Church, must accept the authority of the Bible; p. 216); our whole Christian inheritance and our knowledge of Christ is mediated to us only by Christian antiquity.

And it is not as though antiquity's belief in the indivisible 'visible' unity of the Church militant was an isolated item in the number of its opinions; as, for instance, the mass of ancient Christians may have believed that the earth was the centre of the material universe. No; it was a belief that entered into the very fabric and texture of ancient Christianity. It was, to use Newman's distinction, not so much a doctrine as a principle. And it was a principle of universal practical and theoretical application. Thus Cyprian applies it not only to the question of schism but to that of heresy (in the *De Unitate*). The doctrinal decisions of ecumenical councils derive their authority partly and finally from papal ratification (this is clearly seen in the story of the Chalcedonian formula, A.D. 451), but partly from the fact that the council is regarded as virtually the whole episcopal body, deliberating and defining under the guidance of the Holy Spirit—this idea breaks down if Bishops outside the Great Church are still qualified while outside to be part of the teaching body. It is difficult to see how, if at all, the doctrinal and practical problems of antiquity could have been solved, but for the conviction that the single communion

⁷ The Catholic Church is reckoned to number about 400 million members. The Eastern Orthodox (before the Communist revolution) were about 160 million. The total number of Anglicans and Protestants (not all of whom would admit the division of the visible Church) is perhaps 230 millions.

known to subsequent historians as the Catholic Church, had divine authority to settle all the issues requiring settlement in order that Christianity might function as a concrete entity legislating for the present, pre-determining the future, and representing the past. This difficulty is illustrated by the predicament of those—especially certain Anglicans—who hold that since A.D. 1054 the Church has existed in two or more parts; they have to admit that all issues raised since that date, except such as have been solved by morally universal consent, remain pending until such time as the Church is re-united in a single body; in other words the teaching Church has been in a state of arrested development for nearly nine centuries. But if the early 'Catholic' Church was in fact mistaken in its claims for itself; if Montanists, Novatianists, Donatists, Nestorians, Monophysites remained real constituent parts of the Church after their departure or expulsion from the parent body, then development was arrested almost before the last apostle was well dead, and (despite Dr Greenslade's confidence) Arianism and Pelagianism have not yet received the *coup de grace*.⁸

It is true that this result of his position may seem tolerable to Dr Greenslade, since he, I think, dispenses with the notion of an infallible Church or *magisterium* (see for instance, p. 214, second paragraph). But this puts him for a second time gravely at odds not only with the numerical majority of his fellow Christians to-day but with the moral *consensus* of Christian antiquity. Are we not justified in asking what is the authority for and the source of this new version of religion purporting to be authentically Christian? 'Christianity', wrote Newman in the Introduction to his Essay on Development, 'has been long enough in the world to justify us in dealing with it as a fact in the world's history. Its genius and character, its doctrines, precepts, and objects, cannot be treated as matters of private opinion or deduction, unless we may reasonably so regard the Spartan institutions or the religion of Mahomet . . . Christianity is no theory of the study or the cloister. It has long since passed beyond the letter of documents and the reasoning of individual minds, and has become public property.' This Christianity which is a fact in the world's history is a religion which through

⁸ It might be said that Arianism and Pelagianism are refuted by the *consensus fidelium*. But would not Dr Greenslade agree that his own ecclesiology was condemned by anticipation by the ancient *consensus* on the nature of the Church?

the centuries down to the Reformation, and since then except where that quickly localized revolt has exerted its influence, held two radical and constitutive convictions, both of which Dr Greenslade surrenders.

Dr Greenslade is no defender of the concept of a purely invisible Church, whether of the predestinate or of those in a state of grace. But it is not quite easy to see what we are to substitute for the essentially indivisible association with which antiquity unhesitatingly identified the Church. The following passage is of interest in this connexion:

What is right in Cyprian is to be retained. There is a continuous, historical, concrete, society, founded—or to bring out its continuity with the ancient People of God, refounded—by Christ, and to this society certain means of grace have been entrusted. Membership of this Church comes about by baptism, normally, and this Church is always in a real sense one, even visibly one. What has to be reconsidered in Cyprian is the identification of that one Church with a single communion . . . (p. 183. I do not think that I have falsified Dr Greenslade's meaning by stopping short here).

May I be quite frank, and say that I do not succeed in putting any definite meaning on this passage? The Church, we are told, is a historical, concrete society (that is, I take it, it is not merely an 'invisible Church of the elect'), and this Church is visibly one. Yet it is not a single communion. Turn the words how one will, it seems to me that there must be some confusion lurking in Dr Greenslade's use of the word society. What is the difference between a society and an association? And what is a dissociated association? If the Church is to be identified with more than one communion, this means that the Church is dissociated. If it is dissociated, how can it be an association? But if a society is not an association, what is it?

I run the risk of becoming wearisome by delaying on this point. But it seems to me that we are here at a fundamental *crux* of the whole ecumenical movement in so far as that movement wishes to avoid the Scylla of a purely invisible Church without falling into the Charybdis of 'Rome' (or Orthodoxy). And it is the *crux* also for very many, Anglicans for example, who are not deeply

SCHISM AND UNITY

interested in the ecumenical movement but wish to regard their own communion as 'part' of the single Church of Christ. Again and again, in reading studies on the Church by non-Catholics, we are brought up against this contradiction, as it seems to me, of a society which is not one but several co-ordinate societies.

Dr Greenslade and I have both, at different times, been members of one society, an Oxford college, dear (I doubt not) to both of us. Let us suppose that a group from among the fellows and scholars of that College cease for reasons good or bad to recognize the legislation and government of the fellows as a whole; let us suppose that this dissident group buys a house in Norham Gardens and there establishes itself, under the governance of the fellows who lead it into this 'schism', and after obtaining a charter from the State or recognition by the University, draws up its own constitutions (probably very similar to those of their former College), admits new members, and in fact behaves in all respects as *sui iuris*. Is there any legitimate sense in which it can be said that the two establishments thus existing, the old college and the new, are 'one society'? Can it possibly be said that the corporate acts of the new establishment are acts of the previously existing college? Can it be argued that the scholars and fellows who did not join in the 'schismatical' movement no longer constitute a whole society, or that their corporate acts are no longer the fully valid acts of the society preceding the schism? It is just arguable, in the case of a college, that the 'schism' might take such a form that neither of the resultant bodies could claim to be the original society. In that case, it is obvious that the original society is no longer capable of functioning as a society, no longer in fact exists as a society; and if a society no longer exists as a society, it no longer exists at all—it has gone into dissolution, like a human body after death. Something, or some things, else, may exist, but it (or they) are not the society; there has been *corruptio* and *generatio*; a new form, or forms, assuming the old matter. But the Church—and here I am confident Dr Greenslade will agree with me—cannot cease to exist, for it is part of the 'new and eternal covenant'.

I therefore in all seriousness ask Dr Greenslade, and those who share his opinions on the divisibility of the Church, to tell us what they mean by the word 'society', by the phrase 'a continuous,

historical, concrete society, visibly one', when they apply this word, these phrases to the Church. Since they do not mean what I (and, I think, the rest of the world) mean by a society, what do they mean by it?

It may be presumptuous, if it is not impertinent, to articulate for another an idea that he has not publicly articulated himself. Still to bring the matter to an issue, I will suggest that what Dr Greenslade's position really amounts to is that the Church ought to be a society, but is essentially a social tendency, a tendency towards becoming a society. In other words, Christ left behind in the world a revelation and means of grace, of which the purpose and the normal effect, when not thwarted by human error and sin, are to organize mankind in a single society. The revelation, having been wholly committed to the books of the Bible, is by divine Providence indefectible; so too are the means of grace. But Christ did not, strictly speaking, found or refound a society with a like guarantee of indefectibility; he only bequeathed to men the persistent social dynamism inherent in the revelation and the sacraments.

One may be allowed to doubt whether such a view of the nature of the Church is adequate to the New Testament's teaching and implications on this subject. The society to which Dr Greenslade's social tendency points the way will obviously be a resultant from, logically posterior to, the members comprising it. But the redeemed society of the New Testament is, I suggest, prior to its members; they do not bring it into existence, but it brings them into existence formally as members. And the outcome of this New Testament view of the Church is found in I John ii, 19: 'they went forth from us, but were not of us; had they been of us, they would have remained with us', where—as in Cyprian Ep. lv, 24—the schismatics are regarded as self-condemned as such.⁹

⁹ As a preliminary test of the social tendency theory of the Church, I suggest an experimental substitution of first 'social tendency' and then 'society' for 'Church' in the following passages: (1) Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my . . . (2) The . . . throughout all Judaea had peace. (3) There was continual prayer by the . . . to God. (3) I persecuted above measure the . . . (4) As Christ loved the . . . and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having purified it in the washing of water with the word, that he might present the . . . to himself, glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it might be holy and blameless. (5) On behalf of his body, which is the . . .

SCHISM AND UNITY

It will perhaps be objected that the society which is logically prior to its members is the post-historic Church, 'the holy city, a new Jerusalem' which will 'come down from heaven' at the second coming of Christ; and that the fault of Catholic Christianity since before the days of Irenaeus has been to predicate of the historic Church an achieved unity which is only true of the post-historic. But such an objection is unfaithful to the very core of the Christian revelation as epitomized in the doctrine of the Incarnation. As the founder of the Church was personally identical with the Christ who is yet to come, so also—if the post-historic Church is essentially a single society—the historic Church which is the 'prolongation' of the Incarnation must be essentially a single society. Otherwise, in this interim between the Ascension and the Second Coming, we are back in the 'unrealized eschatology' of Judaism. Here I think we have the cardinal error of the Reformation, a failure to see the implications of the 'mysteries' of God's kingdom through to their sublime end; the mysteries of this kingdom which is given by anticipation in this age, to be glorified in the age to come. I have suggested elsewhere that the Social Tendency theory is really a deutero-docetism, a failure, in reference to the Church, to grasp the final breath-taking truth of the word made flesh.

If I understand Dr Greenslade correctly, the two principal objections which he would make to the Catholic doctrine of the Church as a single association are as follows. (1) Theologically, he points to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church concedes that sacraments and orders outside her own communion may, if certain conditions are fulfilled, be valid; and he argues that where there are valid sacraments, there is the Church. (2) Practically, he is sure that grace is given outside the Roman Catholic communion, and given as a result of non-Roman-Catholic sacramental ministrations and of ministries outside that communion. It seems to him incredible that all this grace is 'uncovenanted', and therefore again he concludes that the communions within which it is given must be within the Church, *extra quam nulla salus* (see for instance, pp. 181-4).

(1) It will be observed that the reasoning behind this argument is the same as Cyprian's in the baptismal controversy; though it is used to produce an opposite effect. Sacraments cannot be had

outside the Church; therefore, said Cyprian, all so-called sacraments outside the Catholic communion are null. Sacraments cannot be had outside the Church; therefore, says Dr Greenslade, wherever the sacraments are found, there is the Church. But the common premiss of these two syllogisms is not self-evident, nor deducible from any agreed truths. There is a good deal in Sacramental theology which can only be learnt from authority. Thus, that a layman can administer valid baptism is not a self-evident truth. Yet Dr Greenslade, I think, holds it, as does the Church. It is similarly by reference to the teaching authority of the Church that we discover whether or not schismatical ministries and sacraments can be valid.

(2) But, says Dr Greenslade, the doctrine that schismatical orders can be valid, and that schismatical baptism (with the right intention, form and matter) is valid landed Augustine, owing to his acceptance of the notion that the Church is a single communion, in the position that 'a "valid" eucharist can take place which is totally inefficacious, in which no grace is given, in which Christ is present sacramentally, to no one' (p. 179). This seems to him so absurd that he prefers to throw over the whole Catholic tradition about the nature of the Church rather than accept such a consequence. But I suggest that development rather than revolution may relieve us of some of the absurdity.

Augustine, in common with the Fathers generally (and perhaps especially the Western Fathers) usually takes a very objective line in theology. By this I mean that he talks according to the normal scheme of things which divine revelation has laid down, prescindingly from subjective 'abnormalities' of the kind, for instance, which modern theologians assign to the heading 'invincible ignorance'. We all talk in the same way to a very large extent. Thus we say that it is sinful to steal. We do not as a rule find it necessary to qualify that remark by pointing out that if in a given case a man mistakenly but sincerely, judges that he may steal without offending his conscience, he does not in fact commit sin by stealing. We say that idolatry is sinful, and it is idolatry to give to the creature such worship as is due only to the Creator. We do not usually trouble to point out that a man, who genuflects to a piece of bread which he thinks mistakenly has been consecrated, has not committed

sin. In the same way, Augustine says that schism is a 'most horrible sacrilege'; and it is obvious enough that one who, by receiving holy communion schismatically, commits in the very act a most horrible sacrilege, cannot expect to receive grace in that act. But the situation will be quite different if the schismatical person in question is, as we say, 'in good faith'. In his case schism is present as a fact but not as a sin; and it is therefore no obstacle to the reception of grace, which will in fact be received (provided of course that there are no other obstacles; a proviso which holds for a Catholic equally with a *bona fide* schismatic). It will be observed that this sufficiently obvious consideration may cover a great deal of ground. Let us suppose, for instance, that the Holy See grants implicit jurisdiction for oriental schismatical priests in the tribunal of penance. And let us suppose (what surely requires little effort to believe) that the vast majority of oriental schismatics are 'in good faith' in their adherence to their schism. It follows at once that the eucharists of oriental schismatics are usually not only valid but efficacious. And this consequence imposes no strain on Augustine's theological position, while remaining faithful to the traditional principle that the Church is a single communion, *extra quam nulla salus* (saving always 'good faith').

Not only does our 'development' impose no strain on Augustine's theology; it is almost adumbrated by him. I do not indeed agree with the statement that Augustine 'allows that many who appear to be outside the Church are really in it' (p. 181). I think that some carelessness of expression on Augustine's part has misled Dr Greenslade here. He refers us to *De Bapt.* V, 38, a passage in Augustine's defence of the validity of schismatical baptism against Cyprian. Cyprian had quoted as referring to the Church the passage from the Canticle of Canticles: 'thou art an enclosed garden, my spouse and sister, a sealed spring, a well of living water, a garden with fruit of thy fruit trees'. Augustine argues that this passage cannot be predicated *simpliciter* of the historical Church, but of the fixed number of the saints, predestined before the foundation of the world'. He points out that of these predestined souls 'some still live wickedly or even wallow in heresies or in pagan superstitions; yet even there the *Lord knoweth his own*. For in that ineffable knowledge of God many who seem "outside" are [really]

“inside” and many who seem “inside” are “outside”. Of all these therefore who, so to say, are intrinsically and secretly “within” consists that enclosed garden.’ It is obvious, I think, that Augustine only means here that the predestined will be members of the post-historic Church; not that they are necessarily already members of the historic Church. For some of them, as he says, still live ‘wickedly’, and at the beginning of this section he had declined to apply the ‘enclosed garden’ passage to ‘the avaricious, the fraudulent . . . usurers, drunkards, the envious’. (Dr Greenslade also refers to *De Unitate*—otherwise *Epistula ad Catholicos*—74.¹⁰) This appears to be a slip, since the passage in question—‘many such are in fellowship of sacraments with the Church and yet are no longer in the Church’—does not refer to good schismatics, as Dr Greenslade implies, but to bad Catholics, as the context clearly shows. Bad Catholics, not yet excommunicated, are ‘in communion of sacraments with the Church’, that is to say they are to the outward eye real members of the Church; but spiritually they are already alienated from the Church by their unforgiven sins. The situation of the good schismatic is not considered here.)

But Augustine is aware that individuals who, through no fault of their own, are outside the ‘fellowship of the sacraments’ of the single association which is the Catholic Church, are in a different spiritual case from those whose separation is culpable; and he is aware that baptism received from a schismatic may in fact aggregate an individual to the Catholic Church.¹¹ Thus, in order to justify his own action in writing a letter to some Donatists (and Donatism he counts as not only schism but a heresy, because it has become an ‘inveterate schism’), he first quotes, ‘a man who is a heretic to avoid after one reproof’, and then proceeds: ‘But they are not to be reckoned among heretics who defend their opinion, false and perverse though it be, with no obstinate passion; especially if it be an opinion which they have not conceived with bold presumption but have inherited from parents who had been deceived and fallen into error,¹² and if they seek the truth with anxious care, being ready to correct their views when they have found it’. Again

¹⁰ The Augustinian authorship of this treatise has been questioned: the point is immaterial for our purpose here.

¹¹ See Batiffol, *Le Catholicisme de S. Augustine*, pp. 248-50.

¹² This is the case of nearly all modern ‘heretics’ and schismatics.

an who is in 'extreme necessity' (e.g. with the imminent prospect of death?) and cannot find a Catholic to baptize him, may laudably receive baptism from the hands of a non-Catholic and 'should straightway die, we hold him for a Catholic' (*De Bapt.* I, 3); such a man being 'in spiritual union with the Church' (*in animo ac Catholica custodita*) imposes no obstacle of perverse will to the valid sacrament which he receives, and therefore the sacrament is efficacious in his case. Somewhat similarly, an infant who is being baptized cannot make the act of faith which is required of an adult candidate for baptism, but as he does not 'oppose the obstacle of any opinion against the faith, he receives the sacrament of faith to his salvation [i.e. efficaciously]' (*Ep.* xcvi, 10); Augustine is here speaking no doubt of an infant receiving baptism from a Catholic, but the same principle is obviously applicable to infants receiving it from schismatics, since the infant is incapable of opposing the obstacle of an opinion against Catholic unity. We can well imagine such an infant growing up in a schismatical or heretical communion, practising its religion and defending its tenets, yet never 'sinning against the light'. He is validly and efficaciously baptized, and will therefore receive the actual graces to which baptism entitles him, and may reach a high degree of sanctity. The further case considered by Augustine is of Catholics unjustly excommunicated: 'Divine providence often allows . . . even good men to be expelled from the Christian association. When they hear this wrong with the utmost patience on behalf of the unity of the Church, and do not contrive any novelties of heresy or schism . . . the Father who sees in secret crowns them in secret' (*De vera relig.*, 11); Augustine plainly supposes that unjust excommunication does not as such involve what is to-day called loss of a state of grace'.

In the cases so far considered,¹³ valid baptism is pre-supposed. There seems no reason for denying that all those, like a Catholicly baptized infant, are in some real way 'members' of the Catholic Church. But Augustine would certainly deny that the schismatical communions *as communions* (as 'churches', to use the modern parlance without prejudice) are 'parts' of the Church. For him,

¹³ Except possibly the first, as stated with complete generality by Augustine, of a well-disposed adherent of a *heretical* sect.

as we have seen, as for virtually the whole of Christian antiquity there is only one organized body which as such can be labelled 'Church'; for by 'Church' is meant not a mere *numerus baptizatorum* but an organized society with a common mind and will finding expression through the acts of officials who are *en règle*. The validly baptized schismatic whose 'invincible ignorance' or good faith renders him innocent of the subjective sin of schism, is a Church 'member' in exile—like a member of Parliament attending the meetings of the communist party under the mistaken impression that he is at Westminster. I cannot see that, granted valid baptism, these 'concessions' on Augustine's part in any way undermine his general position that there is 'no salvation outside the Church' and that the Church is a single organized hierarchical association.

We have what is at first sight a different situation when we come to the problem of those not (validly) baptized. Unbaptized martyrs for the Catholic faith find in their heroic death a 'baptism of blood'. Adult catechumens may already have such a faith and such a 'conversion of heart' that, in case sacramental baptism cannot be secured for them before death, their faith and 'conversion' may supply the lack of the sacrament (*De Bapt.* IV, 29). And even pagans in pre-Christian times (witness Job) might receive a revelation of the (future) mediator and belong to the 'spiritual Jerusalem' although inculpably not members of the visible People of God (*De civit. Dei*, XVIII, 47); Augustine does not, so far as I am aware, develop this thought in its possible application to the Christian era, although he says that Cornelius the centurion had, before baptism, been by his almsgiving 'cleansed in a certain way' or 'to a certain extent' (*Sermo*, CXLIX, 7).¹⁴ But the catechumens are really enough for our purpose. Augustine's treatment of them shows that he is prepared to admit that 'baptism of desire' (as it is called by modern theologians) can, in cases when sacramental baptism is impossible, supply the place of sacramental baptism so far as regards its precisely saving efficacy.¹⁵ If this is so when sacramental baptism is physically impossible, surely it may be so

¹⁴ The good thief, who exercises Augustine considerably, might be equated with catechumens.

¹⁵ I interpose this qualification because only sacramental baptism bestows sacramental 'character'.

When the impossibility is 'moral', e.g. a sincere conviction that sacramental baptism is illicit or unnecessary.

The normal religious situation, we may say, is one in which the 'institutional element' and the 'mystical element' (the former being the Catholic Church and its sacraments, the latter the intellect and will of the individual believer) are both fully present and fit like hand in glove; as when an unbaptized person is converted after reaching the full use of reason and is baptized by a Catholic minister upon full profession of Catholic faith. It is this normal situation which theology normally presupposes in its *dicta*. The institutional and the mystical elements may be described as respectively the social expression and the interior personal affirmation of religion. Both are necessary for full normality, since every human being is potentially a member of society, yet also has an incommunicable interior personal life. But one or other element may be inculpably absent or inadequately represented, as when an infant receives baptism (contributing nothing personal to the proceeding, since he is incapable of making an act of intellect or will);¹⁶ or when a Quaker in full 'good faith' declines to be baptized. In either case the human being in question is only saved by the grace of Christ. The principle *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* is a reminder to all who have attained the full use of reason that only physical or moral impossibility can excuse them from actual visible adherence to the one Catholic communion; it may have a deeper meaning, in so far as all the grace won by Christ is bequeathed by Him to the Catholic Church, so that even those who are saved by 'baptism of desire' can be said not to be saved apart from the Church. There remain to be considered those who die before reaching the full use of reason and without sacramental baptism. Here, if anywhere, it may be suggested, is a possible sphere for 'uncovenanted mercies'.

It therefore seems to me that Augustine's fundamental positions as regards the Church militant and the validity of sacraments are capable of development in such ways as to make full allowance for the fact that grace is given outside the visible limits of the one Catholic communion (the opposite view is, I take it, the one

¹⁶ I pass over the question whether a baptized infant at death is enabled, before leaving the state of probation, to make an act of charity.

condemned by the Holy See in the condemnation of Quesnel's twenty-ninth proposition: 'outside the Church no grace is given'). The development suggested seems to me to be in no way contradictory of Augustine's own fundamental positions and it seems to meet Dr Greenslade's legitimate requirements. I commend it as an alternative to the line which he himself recommends (*viz.* a surrender of the basic principle that the Catholic Church is a single association), since once the basic principle of the Catholic doctrine of the Church is abandoned, not only are we embarked upon a course of thinking lacking authority and contradicted by authority, and by the *auctoritas* of Christian history; not only are we faced with social and theological disintegration; but we have in fact turned our backs upon the deepest intimations of the Bible and have shown ourselves unfaithful to the deepest Christian principle of all, the principle that our salvation, in all its essential features (including its aspect as perfect society), is given by God before it is actualized by us, the principle of prevenient grace which means that we are called not to become by our own efforts what we are not, but to become what by God's grace we Christians already 'are'.

It is inevitable that a Catholic should disagree with Dr Greenslade's main contention. But he has performed a real service not only in his reading of the patristic evidence, but in drawing attention to the precise point at which Catholic doctrine on the Church and that of what I may call moderate Reformed theology diverge. If this book may be considered as in some sense a fruit of the ecumenical movement, it may remind us of the important function that that movement can perform, and is performing, in directing attention to the question: What sort of a thing is the Church? There is perhaps some danger that the Movement may feel impelled to concentrate too exclusively on *rapprochement* between the Western non-Catholic communions, if only because the Catholic doctrine of the Church, and that which is most general and traditional among the Orthodox, is one that cannot lend itself to facile compromise. All the more important is it that Catholics should show a friendly interest in, and prayerful sympathy with the Movement and that efforts should be made to explain to non-Catholics that the Catholic doctrine does not imply that grace

SCHISM AND UNITY

cannot be given 'outside' the normal limits of the Church. And on the other hand books like Dr Greenslade's, with the recognition that Christianity is not only a contemporary fact but a legacy from the past, and their desire to learn from that past, may be most valuable checks upon a sort of impatience to invent and accept any sort of opportunist ecclesiology that could be held to justify (really to rationalize) premature practical decisions; or even to take practical decisions and 'let theology look after itself'. Dr Greenslade himself offers his own suggestion, that the patristic doctrine of the Church as a single communion be abandoned, as a possible basis for intercommunion between bodies not yet doctrinally one. I should regret this as endangering the deep Christian conviction that practice is subordinate to truth.)

A PHILOSOPHER OF ACCEPTANCE: LOUIS LAVELLE

by

J. LACROIX

This is a translation by Dom Illtyd Trethowan of an article, *Un Philosophe et son Consentement*, by Jean Lacroix, published in *Lumière et Vie* 7 (December 1952).

THE MAN AND HIS WORK

LOUIS LAVELLE thus ended his Inaugural Lecture at the *Collège de France*, where he succeeded Bergson, on 2nd December 1941: 'To seek the absolute in oneself and not outside oneself in the most intimate, profound and personal experience, but a certain absolute in which we can only participate, which establishes our very existence in an ever-renewed communication with all beings by the intermediation of all things; to enhance the importance of a psychology which a certain sort of science and a certain sort of metaphysics have combined to make us despise; not to reject the intelligence, as we are tempted to do when its function is to reveal to us the evils from which we are suffering but not to produce them; not to rely upon emotion unless it is purified in the life of thought: such are the demands of French thought to which we intend to remain loyal. It is not in avoiding contact with the absolute, but in trying to rediscover it in all the events of our lives that we shall give them their true significance and this will make us capable of appreciating the weight of our burden and of accepting it.' In thus describing the requirements and the character of French philosophy, Lavelle was describing his own. The former *Khagneux* of Lyons, who had been professor there for some time before his ten years at the *Collège de France* (he died 1st April 1951), has always effaced himself behind his work and his writing. In a succession of publications, varied in character but all saying fundamentally the same thing, from his theses *La dialectique du monde sensible* and *La perception visuelle de la profondeur* to his *Quatre Saints* (St Francis of Assisi, St

A PHILOSOPHER OF ACCEPTANCE

John of the Cross, St Teresa, St Francis of Sales), by way of his philosophical books *De l'Etre*, *De l'Acte*, *Du temps et de l'Eternité*, *De l'Ame humaine*, and his psychological and ethical studies such as *La Conscience de soi* or *L'erreur de Narcisse*, he developed a profound philosophy, both personal and traditional at the same time, not by reaction against the tendencies of his own age, but seeming to ignore them, pursuing his own road, which may well prove lasting in the measure of its superiority to the preoccupations of the present.

The man was altogether like his thought. The extraordinary simplicity of his style, appearing to flow from a source which was never either turbid or dry, was a conquest rather than a gift: the expression of a personality which, although reserved, was always ready to give itself. For him philosophy was one with the interior life, one which was unceasingly re-created and present to him. Malebranche, that great psychologist of the seventeenth century, often contrasts the *bel esprit*, with its brilliant imagination, devoted to images, which never attains the truth because it prefers itself to truth, and the *méditatif*, slow-moving, seeking not to dazzle but to understand, silencing sensations, emotions, passions and imaginations so as to be attentive only to the interior Word which continually speaks to us and enlightens us. Such was Lavelle: as with his master Malebranche, the philosophical life and the religious life enriched one another, and for him reflexion was always meditation. Certainly no philosophy was more a philosophy of the spirit, and no man was more of a 'spiritual'. He did not, indeed, despise the intellect; in fact he constructed one of the most complete and, in a sense, most elaborate systems of thought in our time; but he knew that the intellect is in the service of something which transcends it, and he considered that he had sufficiently refuted Brunschwig by showing that for him the spirit is identical with the intelligence. No doubt it is true to say with Plotinus that the attempt to rise above the stage of intelligence without passing through it runs the risk of falling below it; but to say, as Brunschwig did, that the spiritual is nothing but the intellectual is to degrade the spirit by falling into the opposite excess and to misconceive the proper value both of heroism and of sanctity. The problem of our destiny, far from being infra-philosophical, belonging to biological

thinking or individualistic egoism, is on the contrary that which best discloses to us the very nature of the spirit and its deep-seated orientation. So Lavelle thought of death as what frees us from the body and gives us over to pure spirituality. We must not, then, be too much preoccupied with the dead. 'We have to seek our own salvation and that of our neighbour's; we have no right to disturb the sleep of the dead.' He added that 'the survival which the dead have in the memory of the living is not their true survival'. And he concluded, in regard to Bergson, that the death of a thinker 'cannot be honoured except by a cult which is spiritual and secret; his life disappears; he remains simply as a pure source on which men continually draw'. The life of the philosopher must be discreet and reserved so as not to act as a screen for his philosophy. And, in a sense, only death, which makes the man disappear, gives us his thought in all its purity. So, in the literal sense of the word, death is truly a *revelation*. It will therefore be to respect Lavelle's deepest desire to forget his personality at this point and to have recourse to that purified source which he has now become and which is disclosed to us more perfectly by his death.

A PHILOSOPHY OF BEING

The philosophy of Lavelle is what is called, technically, an ontology, that is, a philosophy of being: it has been accurately defined as a *speculative ontology of the reflexive type*. When the little volume called *De l'Etre* appeared in 1928 — it may well prove his masterpiece — it called forth as much astonishment and admiration. By maintaining the thesis of the unity of being and as the Scholastics called it, its univocity, by declaring that the possible is not anterior to being and, as it were, its origin, but an aspect, and in an exact sense, a category of being, and by founding his whole philosophy on an ontological argument which identifies being and the idea of it in God, Lavelle was developing a philosophy of being in an age which, in France at least, had lost touch with it. He once said that one is a philosopher to the extent that one is a Platonist. For the myth of the cave is the introduction to philosophy. There is a sensible world and an intelligible world, a world of appearances and a world of hidden realities, which are the only authentic ones. And one of these worlds hides the other from us

A PHILOSOPHER OF ACCEPTANCE

but not to the extent of making us unable to descry it or of preventing us from reaching it. We must come out of the cave, from the world of shadows, and discover, little by little, the world of the true Ideas. But the myth can be misunderstood. The reality is not *behind* appearances, nor is being *behind* experience. The meaning of play and of mimicry is not behind appearances but in them: it inhabits them as the soul inhabits the body. The person is not behind its impersonations, but in them. The mystery of the subject is not hidden away in some recess from which one can manage to extract it; it is everywhere and penetrates the totality of the 'I' and all its acts like an atmosphere. The noumenon is in phenomena. So the intelligible world is not separated from the sensible one, but mingles with it and is both transcendent and immanent at the same time; it is in some sort enclosed there, and our task is to draw it forth or at least to rediscover it. So being is not for Lavelle an ultimate abstraction, a sort of common denominator of all objects once they have been denuded of their concrete qualities, the term of widest extension which has no longer any comprehension at all; nor is it that intuition which is infinite, no doubt, but so empty that Hegel can call it almost nothing. It is a concrete datum, the most concrete of all, since every object is only an aspect of it limited in space and destructible in time. Lavelle never pronounces the word 'being' without respect, for behind it we divine the sure and steady life-breath of everything: or rather, of God himself. So Being is the origin of all things, the inexhaustible source. 'Being', Lavelle writes, 'is the universal object . . . The intelligence is the child of being. All the objects of thought are within being.' The affirmation of being is the primary evidence, the starting point of philosophy: to exclude nothingness and to affirm the universality of being are at bottom one and the same.

BEING AND THE 'I': THE ORIGINAL FACT

In this way the very notion of philosophy gains precision. At the origin of all thought, there is a primitive experience, which is that of the subject grasping himself as being, that is as forming part of being. The *Cogito* is both one and double: the discovery of the self, and the discovery of being, or more precisely the discovery of myself inscribed upon being. 'The original fact is that I can

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

neither posit being independently of the self which grasps it, nor the self independently of the being upon which it is inscribed.' And Lavelle has confided to us that he had himself experienced this sort of immediacy between the self and being from his earliest years and that it was the beginning of his philosophical vocation. 'May I be allowed to say', he wrote, 'that two feelings have remained with me from my childhood, from a time when the word "philosophy" had no meaning for me, and that no other has ever tarnished their freshness: the *first* arising from the discovery of this permanent miracle of initiative by which I can always introduce some new event into the world, for example, by moving my little finger, the mystery of which lies less in the movement which I produce than in this altogether interior *fiat* which enables me to produce it, and the *second* arising from the discovery of this presence which is always there, from which I can never escape, from which thoughts of the present or the past cannot divert me, so that time itself, far from making my life a vague oscillation between nothing and being, only enables me, thanks to a relation between the different forms of presence which my liberty chooses, to form in being a being which is my own.' So we must not confuse being with its determinations or limitations, which are objects or phenomena. Objective being is not the whole of being. But whereas a writer like Alquié discovers the insufficiency of objects and gains only the *nostalgia for being*, Lavelle reveals its relation to true being. Thus all our efforts must be directed to recovering the authenticity of being in all things. If we can and must distinguish the different forms of being, it is utterly impossible to escape from it. 'It is for us to rediscover in each particular presence the presence of the whole from which we have detached it.' Since the self discovers being by discovering its own presence to being, we are on a level and, in a sense, on all fours with it. As Bergson said, whatever reality may be, we are of it. The whole of philosophy consists in endlessly renewing and deepening this experience by which I grasp myself while inscribing myself upon being. We have tried, said Lavelle, 'to enhance the meaning of this fine word "being", the finest in human language, the use of which, as Rousseau saw ("to give significance to this little word") is more characteristic of man than his upright stature.'

THE PASSAGE THROUGH THE NATURAL WORLD

The charge of pantheism has sometimes been brought against this philosophy. For once in a way, Lavelle's reaction was somewhat violent. In the first place, for him, the real enemy is not pantheism, which does after all adhere to being, but phenomenalism, which is left with nothing but phenomena, appearance, and leaves man without consistency. But Lavelle considers that he entirely escapes the reproach of pantheism by his conception, unitary and double at the same time, of liberty and participation. Pantheism, according to him, always makes man a part of nature in one way or another. Now it is quite true that the 'I' grasps itself in the first place as belonging to the world and, if you will, as forming part of it. But pantheism is not found on the level of the recognition of fact — which is not in question — but on that of its interpretation. And it is just the pantheistic interpretation that Lavelle rejects. For this first grasp of being is not false, but dangerous or, more precisely, it *offers a choice*. We can utilize nature in succumbing to it; or we can transcend it in our passage through it. In either case we are not running away from the world, and there is a form of idealism which Lavelle condemns as much as materialism. The passage through nature is inevitable; the only problem is that of the direction and significance of this passage. Shall we content ourselves with objects? Or shall we discover the authenticity of being? In fine, the whole question is whether we shall make nature the final goal, but it will still be a *way*, even if we do not make it an *end*. It keeps us in it if we confine ourselves to its necessities, if we remain subject only to our needs, our instincts and our passions; it throws open to us, on the contrary, true ideas and our authentic destiny if we know how to discern that spiritual function which it both contains and conceals at the same time. Our life is therefore, in an exact sense, a *work of choice*, and such is the function of liberty. The business of *things* in Lavelle's philosophy is to send us back continually to *beings*: their function is one of mediation. In a sense nature is that which sends me back unceasingly to myself. It is in returning to myself that I discover the origin and source of being, since I discover myself as inscribed upon being. 'In digging down to myself', wrote Lavelle, 'I reach the very root of being. It is often

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

supposed that subjectivity is a kind of illusion or mirage and that our object is elsewhere; but it is this object that I seek elsewhere which is the illusion or mirage, the only true objectivity is that of my own subjectivity.' In thus becoming present to ourselves, we touch that essence of things which is in us and which constitutes us as it constitutes all things. We do not of course come to a stop in so doing in the sense of being carried away by the universal flux; but rather we grapple ourselves and become established in a certain stability. 'I do not grasp what I am except in this act by which I tear myself away from "becoming" so as to begin once more to exist, this act without which I should not even perceive "becoming"'. In discovering ourselves in this way in our profoundest depth, we discover the nature of the Being by which alone we exist. And what the intuition reveals to us is that Being is an act. 'The interiority of being is an act which is in continual exercise and in which we never cease to participate.' Lavelle's essential theory, once more like Malbranche's, is that of participation: it seems to bring us close to pantheism and yet delivers us from it.

PHILOSOPHICAL FAITH

In his *Introduction à l'ontologie*, Lavelle makes his terminology precise: *being* characterizes the source of participation, *existence* the act of participation by which a being is constituted, *reality* being in so far as it is given to us, that is, in so far as it limits this act. *Being* corresponds to it. God is pure Act, infinitely present to himself and this *total presence* could be used as a definition of him, a presence which, we might say, is always recreated, that is, eternally in act. The 'I' is a participated being, that is, it is first found within being and then freely gives itself its interior being by an act which is an acceptance. The radical and primitive finiteness of the 'I' is therefore that which measures its distance from God: that on the one hand it places an 'interval' between the part and the whole, and on the other hand, by raising up into existence time and the world, enables the self to inscribe its being within total being. So we may say that I know the nature of being in the act by which I know it. Since this knowledge is precisely an act, being itself is an act. And this being-act is immanent, is present to consciousness, and constitutes its inexhaustible source, giving it movement and the power of

A PHILOSOPHER OF ACCEPTANCE

indefinite progress. Kant had seen, of course, that the mind is an activity. But in the context of his 'critical' philosophy he could not grasp it as it really is: the Kantian *Cogito* is purely formal, the activity of the spirit being the mere condition for the possibility of consciousness. Thus its existence is left hanging in mid-air. Lavelle, on the other hand, grasps this activity, which is immanent in consciousness, in its actual exercise. 'The difference which forever separates the critical philosophy from true spiritualism is that for the former act is found by induction while for the latter it is immediately grasped in its very occurrence.' In other words, the true spiritualism is that which can give a primary concrete and philosophical significance to the word *faith*. Philosophical faith is not precisely knowledge, but beyond or rather beneath that, it is the source and principle of all knowledge. Faith could be defined as *participation in a pure Act*: and we might meditate on the exactness and profundity of the expression *act of faith*, which is indeed the purest and highest kind of act. By the *act of faith* we strip ourselves of all that the senses provides us with, all that is given, in order to hand ourselves over to a naked activity. There is too a sort of consubstantiality between faith and the spirit. The spirit is what can never be the object of demonstration or proof, although it is — or rather because it is — at the origin of all demonstration and all proof; it is that which resides entirely in the faith which it has in itself, that which subsists only by this faith. We might say that *faith is God present to the consciousness*. Thus God cannot really be proved — at least in the usual sense of the word 'prove' — for that would be to make him an object; we can only establish that we believe in him, that we have faith in him. The 'proofs' of God's existence have as their sole end to establish that we have in us a requirement of faith which is the special task of reason to justify and not to abolish. 'Faith becomes identical with the very consciousness of participation at the very moment when we realize it. It is not on the same level as knowledge and does not consist in positing the existence of a known object in any way. If there were only objects in the world, then there would be nothing for us but knowledge and all faith's pretensions would be illegitimate. But faith has no other object and no other end except the very act which we perform, and which we never perform (even if it is a pure act of knowledge) without that con-

fidence which animates it. It is not without light, but it is a light which clarifies the act itself and not the representation of some thing which we pretend to put in its place. Faith is what it is and not the mere awareness of oneself, because it is impossible to exercise this activity which is ours without recognizing that there is an inspiration which infinitely transcends it, which never fails it but which it is always failing.'

A PHILOSOPHY OF PARTICIPATION

So pure Act is God: the 'I' is participated act. And the world is only the 'interval' which separates pure Act from the act of participation. 'I participate in a creative power which I limit and which is itself without limitation.' So far, then, from my being a 'part' of the world, we must say that I give life to it and unceasingly restore it by my very participation in pure activity: the world is in a sense only the way in which the totality of beings participate in God. I could not turn my back on it without ceasing to exist; but what I must seek for and love in it, as in myself, is the very source of existence and of life. This philosophy of a dialogue with God is, by the same token, a philosophy of a dialogue with the world and with others. Our effort must be to rejoin a current in which we find our community with objects and with beings, since Being is present everywhere. *The error of Narcissus* is to lose oneself in self-contemplation, to lose one's being for the sake of one's appearance. Narcissus, leaning over the stream and drowning in the search for his own illusory image, was seeking only to regain himself; that was why he perished. What he ought to have done was to disturb the outlines of this image, break it up, and to find in the wreckage of it his true countenance which would have been that of the universe. We must know how to give up what divides us and puts us into opposition in order to regain total unity. To strip oneself spiritually is to turn away from what one has so as to give more freedom to what one is: for the giving up of possession is always in the interest of an increase of being. To give meaning and direction to our lives is to make contact with the absolute in each of our undertakings. If that involves sacrifice and suffering, this sacrifice and this suffering are for a greater good. The gravest error lies in not understanding that

A PHILOSOPHER OF ACCEPTANCE

evil is found not in suffering, but in our attitude in regard to it: *it is not to be defined in relation to the sensibility but in relation to the will*. Evil is thus neither being nor a lack of being, but a refusal to participate: it is an attitude of the will. In fine, it ought not to be posited on the level of being, but on that of existence: it is, once participation has begun, the negative movement of liberty; it is the will's own decision to destroy and annihilate, that is, to degrade or pervert.

TIME AND ETERNITY

The theory of participation is a theory of the self and of God; it is also a conception of time and of eternity. If I existed of myself, that is, if I were the absolute, I should be eternal: eternity is simply the fullness of being. Time, on the other hand, is the mode of existence of a being which does not give being completely to itself, which is both activity and passivity, which receives the possibility of forming itself. Time is that sort of journeying within eternity, that kind of movement of beings towards one another as well as towards Being, which we can call 'duration'. Man lives neither in a wholly discontinuous time nor in pure eternity, but in a present which tries to condense all duration within itself. Without time I should no longer be a particular being, I should be identified with God; without eternity, ceasing to participate in being, I should cease to be in any true sense and my death would be a total death. Duration is at the same time what separates me from God and what puts me into communication with him; it is the mode of existence of a being which is temporal, because it is in process of becoming, and eternal, because it is a being which discovers eternity in time at every moment. Eternity neither precedes nor follows time: 'it is our temporal life itself which is eternal, if we consider it not in the phenomena which manifest it, but in the spiritual activity which takes place by their means'. The difficulty for us is to conceive of time as *the operation of eternity*: it is the contemporaneity of time and eternity which makes each of these two terms the secret of the other. This presence of eternity in time enables us to reverse the usual way of understanding the various moments of time: the past, which is, as it were, the future's future, does not determine the future, but is unceasingly modified by it. It is not the future which emerges

from the past, but the past which emerges from the future. Science, which confines itself to phenomena, is naturally determinist, because it goes from the past to the future: for it, what will be is the necessary effect of what has been. But free man goes from the future to the past. He who turns towards his past deserves to have no future, Oscar Wilde declared. And it is true that we can free ourselves only by detaching ourselves from what we have been. As Alain says, to imitate oneself or to imitate others is all the same: man relapses into the state of savagery as easily as he lies down to rest. But it is not by being ignorant of one's past that one frees oneself from it, but in knowing it, and herein lies the usefulness of history. But we need to understand it, and the philosopher, who disengages its significance, has not always the same idea of it as the historian. Although it bears upon the past, it is less bound to it than it might appear. There are not, strictly speaking, historical *facts*, but historical *acts* — and the act is precisely the spiritual significance of the fact. The only spiritual past is that which I recreate in the present. The past, Lavelle shows, is not so much the sum of our memories as the power to preserve and evoke them, that is, the capacity to revive them at any time by an act of the present. History is a perspective upon the past, but the centre of this perspective is always the present. Thus each generation has its history; for if historical facts remain identical, the significance which we give to them is perpetually changing: knowledge of the past depends at every moment on our preoccupations. The facts remain, but their meaning is always being recreated. So history itself confirms the priority of the future over the past. 'The first category of the historical consciousness', Hegel said magnificently, 'is not memory, but prophecy, expectation, a promise.'

AN ETHIC OF ACT AND OF PARTICIPATION

This philosophy of act and of participation results in an ethic of act and participation. The spirit is presence: morality will be its presence. To make the spirit perpetually present by attaching ourselves to being through an act which revives being in us at every moment — that is our task here below. The condition of every moral life is attention, which is the mediator between the intellect and the will and a sort of junction between the will and the faculty

A PHILOSOPHER OF ACCEPTANCE

f representation. And the supreme virtue is generosity. The whole moral life consists in the shedding of egoism, in the effort whereby we establish in ourselves another will which is more ourselves than we are without it. 'To become ourselves we must cease to think of ourselves.' Lavelle's ethic is all a matter of disappropriation: a being must be turned from what it has so as to fall back upon what it is. We must try to have nothing further to do with possession, to be perfectly stripped and naked so as to be only an act in process of realization. The whole of our morality consists in our becoming free from all 'having' in order to participate in the source of being which is act. This stripping is not accomplished without suffering and indeed anguish, but the suffering and anguish are what we must face and pass through if we are to find peace and joy. 'When we ask the separated "I" to renounce itself in the interest of this grace which we are describing, which brings into it the very principle of knowledge and love, the "I" should experience a feeling of joy and enthusiasm in face of such a promise, since it realizes that its being is on the point of bursting its bounds and enlarging itself indefinitely. On the other hand it is inevitable that it should put up a desperate resistance to this activity which is working upon it, since it realizes that it has to disappear, to give place to another being which it does not yet know, in which its own most familiar being will be, as it were, consumed: the thought of its own annihilation causes it an inexpressible agony which has to be transformed into an absolute and sweet renunciation.' So we are always on our way: no one is born what he ought to be, nor has anyone become it, that is, no one has come to the end of it. Nor does anyone make progress except in coming out of himself, in triumphing over his attachment to himself which separates him from other beings. Friendship and love are the means by which two beings acquire each through the other what neither could have alone. And that is why we must exult in that influence which breaks through the charmed circle of solitude in which souls are imprisoned and which Lavelle defines as 'a discovery of one's own being at the touch of another'. Ethics and metaphysics meet at their highest point. Being is that *total presence* in which lies the ultimate explanation of all particular beings; it is by participating through a free act in this Being-act that we inscribe ourselves upon being, that we really exist. Our true

progress is measured by our progress towards this. Its eternal presence is the cause of our peace and our joy. At every moment we can conquer anxiety and distress by returning to this source of Being which is at the same time the source of happiness. Being never fails us: when it appears to do so, it is we who are failing it. The anxious heart is that lives in the realm of appearances, the victim of a false infinite, set upon a hopeless course. Yet happiness is always within our reach, if only we know how to cleave to Being and to accept it.

A PHILOSOPHY OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE

So this philosopher stands for joy in an age which is haunted by anguish, and his mind is fixed on eternity while those around him are obsessed by the passage of time. This philosophy of being is a philosophy of act, that is, of the being which is itself pure Act, upon which we inscribe ourselves — by giving, we gain ourselves, through a free participation constantly renewed: the being in which we participate by an act cannot but be act itself. Shortly before his death Lavelle defined the philosophy of Sartre as that of the fallen and unhappy man who is not prepared to rise from his fallen state and to tear himself away from his wretchedness. All his own efforts on the other hand, had been directed to making man happy, or rather to restore him to his happiness, thanks to that higher activity which is at the same time the return to oneself and communication with others, that is to say, meditation. Most modern philosophies are torn in two: they are philosophies of a bad conscience, because they have put contradictions at their centres. So they tend readily to reject a future happiness, or they imagine (falsely, of course) that the contradictions have been overcome. The philosophy of Lavelle is a philosophy of peace, of presence and of happiness: it is a philosophy of a good conscience, because it puts participation at its centre. Aimé Forest, the author of a work of similar inspiration *Du Consentment à l'Etre*, who defends Thomism as a philosophy of happiness, once said that Hamelin's *Essai sur les éléments principaux de la représentation* is also a philosophy of a good conscience which has its basis a correlation and not pure contradiction. Undoubtedly it is a modern abuse to make contradiction and war, that is, radical evil, the sole motive force of history. On the other hand, one might

A PHILOSOPHER OF ACCEPTANCE

approach Lavelle and Forest with putting such an emphasis upon acceptance that revolt ceases to have any meaning. As I had occasion recently to remark, in connexion with Camus, all movements of thought fall into two stages, one of recoil and revolt which is idealist, and one of adhesion and acceptance which is realist. But it is certainly the acceptance which is the essential, since the reaction has only a methodological value, and the mind, precisely because it *is*, lives in an atmosphere of affirmation. For a being whose operation, in order to be complete, requires the collaboration of two faculties, the will and the intelligence, participation requires both the assent of the understanding and the consent of the will. As P. André Marc has shown in his *Dialectique de l’Affirmation*, to speak of a philosophy of being, or of acceptance, or of optimism, is one and the same thing.

Moreover Lavelle has not ignored the dramatic side of human existence. For time is precisely the means of participation. The final meaning of our life depends upon the use which we make of time — of this time which either frees or enslaves. Each one has his own participation, that is, lives out his own duration: and so time is a principle of individuation. It is true, then, that time can enslave us instead of freeing us. It contains the whole human drama. But the philosopher’s task is to preach, not enslavement, but liberation, that is, the proper use of time. In a letter of 26th December 1946, Lavelle gave me his most intimate and profound thought on this point in reply to an objection, or rather a doubt, which I had expressed: ‘Is there any need to be afraid, after the years through which we have lived, that we might be tempted to overlook the dramatic character of our existence? Time is this very drama, considered, if one may so put it, in its most abstract form. Philosophy, it seems to me, consists neither in groaning over it nor in gloating over it, but in pressing through it and bringing it to an end. Isn’t this the essential function of the mind’s life and the deepest meaning of all religious thought?’ So the first study of the philosopher is to recognize the primacy of being; without this he is only a sceptic who lives on phenomena and vanishes with them. Our life, we were saying, is a work of choice. For Lavelle, the alternatives are plain: we can choose being and eternity which gives happiness, or we can deny being, choose the inconsistency of phenomena and be ourselves

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

only appearances. 'There are only two philosophies to choose from Pythagoras's, according to which man is the measure of all things but the measure with which he provides himself is that by which he himself is measured; and Plato's, which is also that of Descartes according to which the measure of all things is God and not man but a God who allows man to participate in him, who is not only the God of philosophers but also the God of strong simple souls who know that truth and goodness are there above them and are never refused to those who seek them with sufficient courage and humility.'

[The publication of this version should be taken as an endorsement of the basic inspiration of Lavelle's philosophy rather than of his particular formulas, some of which might seem to lend themselves to an 'anti-intellectualist' or an 'emanationist' interpretation. The translation has reproduced these as literally as possible, sometimes with inelegant results and even (on occasion) with a certain obscurity for fear of giving any tendentious emphasis.]

GABRIEL MARCEL AND THE MYSTERY OF BEING

by

ROBERT OSTERMANN

1. 'Mysteries are not truths which exceed us, but truths which include us.'¹ These words of Jouve, noted by Marcel in his journal for March, 1933, are by no means the beginning of his reflexions on the relationship between the mysterious and the problematic, but they will place us in position. As we might expect, this cardinal distinction of mystery and problem urges us to transcend the inhibitions of words like 'beyond', 'before', 'outside'.² Language tends to betray us into misunderstandings by its imaginal references, the spatial and temporal overtones that halo it; we have to beware the danger of its very familiarity.

So far as the published volumes are concerned,³ the earliest explicit mention of mystery would seem to be in several entries of the journal covering a period from 18th to 22nd January 1919;⁴ and by explicit we must understand that he recognizes at that time another plane of reality, where alone certain superior *rappports* are achieved, with its own proper value for knowledge. Mystery is neither the agnostic's paradise nor the Kantian unknown thing-in-itself, for it can only be in *l'ordre du connaissant*.⁵ At all costs the intellect must be protected from its tendency to repudiate itself: the mysterious in knowledge is what is elusive, partly enigmatic, but it is knowledge all the same. The presence of mystery is a necessary condition of our world. *Un monde d'où le mystérieux serait exclu est un monde où tout ce qui aurait la puissance de se communiquer se communiquerait directement, spontanément — ce monde-là n'est*

¹ Marcel, Gabriel, *Etre et Avoir*, p. 205.

² Marcel, Gabriel, *Reflection and Mystery*, pp. 177 ff.

³ It is impossible to speak with any authority of the occasional writings which to this day Marcel continues to produce for journals like the Paris *Le Figaro*, with its disconcerting rapidity for the student.

⁴ Marcel, Gabriel, *Journal Métaphysique*, pp. 159-61.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

*sûrement pas le nôtre.*⁶ While not yet reducing the order of mystery to the order of existence, nor seeing the kind of union binding them, he does go far towards this ultimate development. The intention of the first journal up to, roughly, the years 1922-23, is primarily to exorcise the demon of essentialism, to isolate and identify its perils. To accomplish this he adopts a strategy of attacks plus an exposition of objectivity (the universality of certain characterizing notes capable of being recognized by any intellect whatsoever): the positive face of existence, its restorative virtues these are mentioned only subordinately. That is why in these pages we are led no further than the assertion that the object excludes all mystery.⁷

The complete articulation of the distinction begins in another journal note, 22nd October 1932,⁸ where he records the result of regarding being as a mystery and not a problem. Is it not possible he wonders,⁹ that there is no such thing as a problem of being, nor any problematic approach to it? Evidently he already knows what he means by problem. Perhaps, he suggests, we are misled by the prevalence of the scientific attitude which takes its investigation outside of *la trame même de la vie*.¹⁰ But the whole purpose of his previous research has been to expose the fallacy of supposing there is any genuine encounter at this level, and so he argues that a problem only arises by breaking a continuity, by an atomization of the real which has to be re-established otherwise the integrity of reality (and knowledge) is shattered. True thought, metaphysical thought, is reflexion trained upon mystery. Germinal though it is the distinction, and its significance, is definitely rooted there.

Precision comes with the essay for which these entries are but notes.¹¹ No merely provisional or arbitrary expression, the distinction between the problematic and the meta-problematic is an organic growth, an expected fruition of all prior speculations. Indeed we must, I think, regard this period as decisive, a clear passage from the

⁶ Ibid., p. 160.

⁷ Ibid., p. 161. Note the distinction (p. 328) between data furnishing the material of a problem and those upon which the mind has to support itself in order to pose any kind of problem.

⁸ *Etre et Avoir*, p. 145.

⁹ Ibid., p. 147.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 147; cf. *Reflection and Mystery*, pp. 215-16.

¹¹ Marcel, Gabriel, *Position et approches concrètes*, translated as *On the Ontological Mystery*, pp. 1-31 in *The Philosophy of Existence*.

hesitations and gropings into a secure possession of his philosophical world. A problem is something I meet, therefore something outside of which I may remain;¹² I can go round it, approach it from every side; no aspect of it is hidden from my gaze. On the contrary, a mystery contains me, my relation to it is not that of two objects face to face. Boundaries overlapping one upon the other, a mystery is greater than my thought about it;¹³ I cannot talk about mystery as though I were unconcerned, disengaged. In other words, I am in the meta-problematic, I am *before* a problem. To use Marcel's already classical statement: 'A mystery is a problem which encroaches upon its own data . . . and thereby transcending itself as a simple problem'.

The necessity for the distinction arises the moment I consider being: its origin is there, in being, and being will not be constrained by me. Clearly it is only when I conduct an enquiry into being that I can realize how inescapable is my own environment by being, which justifies my concluding that the problem of being is more than a problem. It is beyond the grasp of any technique.¹⁴ The interrogation once begun, being as problem is metamorphosed into mystery; the moment I step out I am in mystery; on no other conditions could the enquiry make sense. Being transcends thought, has primacy over it.¹⁵ The traditional opposition of subject and object is no longer adequate, since I am not outside the being I assert and there is no question of the alternative — what is in me or what is before me. More truly, we should say that being is not so much asserted as asserting itself in any act of knowledge.¹⁶ So it is that the meta-problematic is the world of ontology; so also it is that the only authentic view of the world is metaphysical.¹⁷ And so, correspondingly, is the problematic the world of fear and desire, the world of the functional and the kingdom of technics.¹⁸ At stake is the difference between a full world and an empty one; despair or hope, resources or insolvency. *Le plein ou le vide*,¹⁹ that

¹² *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 6.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁴ *Etre et Avoir*, p. 169.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49; cf. *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 8, 18; *Etre et Avoir*, pp. 24, 164, 215-16.

¹⁸ *The Philosophy of Existence*, pp. 1-18.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3; *Journal Métaphysique*, pp. 179, 202.

is the option he makes present to us. In the problematical order we are deceived by our success with technics and mechanical devices of all kinds. Forgetting that being 'involved' (*engagé*) is a fundamental circumstance of human existence and so falsifying our position in reality, we open wide the door to failure, frustration and hopelessness. The paradox is that our fake accomplishments and triumphs are the very cause of our defeat.

But that is not the whole story; the scene widens. What is this rupture of continuity, this problem accessible from every side, is it not the objective order? And mystery, the meta-problematic with its unbounded and unboundable limits, can it be other than the existential being that thought cannot grasp?²⁰ If the metaphysical essence of the object is its power to seal off the mystery hidden within it;²¹ if recollection and mystery are correlatives and there is no recollection before a problem;²² if, finally, from the time there is presence we are beyond the problematic;²³ if these are so, and the consistency of the whole will hardly allow denying them, the distinction problem and mystery is a restatement of the original division objectivity and existence. Of this we have excellent confirmation in the Gifford Lectures,²⁴ when we learn that the solution to a problem is one for common property, i.e. objectivity universality, it is a solution for *n'importe qui*; unlike mysteries problems have to be pointed at, indicated, which is surely the result of the object's circumscription and self-limitation. And parallel to the philosophical development of this theme, the drama reflect a similar preoccupation: separation, solitude, the failure of communication between persons, the dark restless shadows of the human drama projected by human stubbornness, pride indifference.²⁵

It is certain then, that since the important 1925 essay *Existence et Objectivité* these two terms have donned new style. The shift is

²⁰ *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 18: 'Being . . . escapes our grasp (in so far as our grasp is limited to the world of objects and to this alone).'

²¹ *Etre et Avoir*, p. 163.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 164.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-66; cf. *Reflection and Mystery*, p. 216: '... the organic connection between presence and mystery'.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 213-14.

²⁵ Cf. Gaston Fessard, *Théâtre et Mystère*, in *Etudes*, 20 Mars, 5 Avril, 1938. J.-P. Dubois-Dumée, *Solitude et Communion dans le Théâtre de Gabriel Marcel*, in *Existentialisme Chrétien*, pp. 269-91.

to a level round which Marcel's thought has oscillated in the past, the central position occupied by the human person. Problem and mystery describe more faithfully the full range of the world of human experience, they have an adaptability of application, a sensitiveness to the living edge of things not so easily discerned in the earlier distinction which was more the abstract statement of the dilemma man finds himself in: existence cannot be characterized, objectivity leaves existence out, and man is in a lifeless or living world according to which he opts for.

The principal reason for the re-statement lies in the direct approach he begins to make at this critical period to the universe of being,²⁶ and this leads him to consider the ontological status of the subject undertaking an examination of being;²⁷ the incompleteness of the previous exposition is now clear to him. Occasioned by this powerful refining force, the internal connections of earlier reflexions are strengthened and their conclusions unified. The direction is steadily towards man, the task one of reconstruction and repair.

* * * *

2. Being is mysterious, distinguished by all the characteristics (not of course understood in the pejorative Marcellian sense of limiting determinations) of the order of mystery: boundless, it includes and is not included. In this scheme of things man enjoys a position of unique importance. The ontological need is articulated to him; he gives voice to aspirations elsewhere repressed and mute. In order to gain access to being, by which this need is assuaged, it is appropriate and necessary to proceed through man: appropriate because of his situation, necessary because of his structure. Man is both investigated and investigator,²⁸ and his superiority as subject has everything to do with his effective role as object; in himself he defies the apparent contradiction of joining these polar points. Now there can be no misunderstanding the quality of man's qualifications to prosecute an investigation into being. He is within being. He has the inside track. From the very first question I ask about being I cannot help but be aware of my own *engagement*, even my own priority to the question. I am in the meta-problematic, because it is clearly impossible for me to be outside the object of

²⁶ Cf. *Etre et Avoir*, pp. 34-56, 201-05; *The Philosophy of Existence*, pp. 1-8: these lectures composed during the period in question.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7. ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-9.

my study; which is precisely the definition of mystery. That is my situation, and even if it were no more it would still be sufficient a motive for instituting an investigation of being through man. But there is more.

The necessity of beginning with man, Gabriel Marcel would argue, the fact that he is the only place in which such a procedure could succeed — this is not so clearly seen by metaphysicians. Not alone because man is involved is his ontological status of decisive importance. Principally it is due to his structure. Every being is involved, every being participates, but man in a very special manner.

'If we questioned ourselves upon what the metaphysical structure can be of a being capable of recollection, we would progress very far towards a concrete ontology.'²⁹ Now man is that being. Man is able to recollect himself, to effect a withdrawal that is yet not a separation of himself but rather a concentration of spiritual forces;³⁰ an increase of ontological density, not a thinning. Man can, in a measure, stand outside himself, but not so as to be an observer of his conversion into an 'object'; it is as though withdrawing himself he were still able to leave nothing behind; recollection is not abstraction.

It is in virtue of this peculiar recollective power, for example, that I can transcend the seemingly endless regress in which I am involved whenever I consider my thought about being.³¹ Apparently I cannot affirm being without first determining my qualification (echo of Descartes?) for making the affirmation, and so on to an infinity of affirmations and determinations, only by being in a position to *see* the regress I am already superior to it, I transcend it. My capacity to recollect preserves me from what would otherwise be the prison of my self-hood. Recollection is the signal index of man's independence and liberty, and of his central post in the ontological mystery.

As a matter of fact and every-day experience, man not only is central to the ontological mystery, the ontological mystery, we can say with greater truth, is centred in man. Nowhere else in being is there so complete a verification and expression of the identifying

²⁹ *Etre et Avoir*, p. 164; cf. *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 12.

³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 12-13; *Reflection and Mystery*, pp. 125-48, particularly pp. 128-31; *Etre et Avoir*, p. 164.

³¹ *The Philosophy of Existence*, pp. 7-8.

GABRIEL MARCEL AND THE MYSTERY OF BEING

marks of mystery as in the person of man. We have seen how his potential recollectedness is a sign of independence; by means of it he surpasses his self; he reconciles in him the antinomies of being and action,³² not bound by either one or the other. Furthermore, an acquaintance with the world inhabited by man, as well as the frightening and shameful opportunities it offers him, contributes additional evidence of his metaphysical structure. It is a world where despair, suicide and death are always possible, even counselled and encouraged, and so 'the fact that suicide is always possible is the essential starting-point of any genuine metaphysical thought'.³³ The nerve of the argument is that man can respond to this counselling; he is self-determining; suicide is one of the most distinctive signatures he can put to his existential situation.

Suicide is the *wilful* act of betrayal, the initiation by man of the movement towards his destiny, all of which envelop his every action with mystery. Ethical concerns aside — though they are many and important, they are incidental to this main theme — the significance of these data, and of their positive companions, fidelity, hope, love,³⁴ is to reveal man's personal penetration of mystery *by nature*. Thus man is *the* entrance and scene of ontological labour; in him, by virtue of his non-static, non-objective state, are both beginning and end.

This helps to explain the perplexing and paradoxical reference³⁵ to sanctity, whose study is prescribed as the true introduction to ontology. This is not a concession to his Catholic faith: Marcel is not pacifying the pious. An enquiry into being is an exploration of mystery, and since the saint realizes most perfectly in himself the qualities of mystery which the normal man not infrequently leaves unfertilized and embryonic, a study of sanctity and its conditions is the high road to ontological wisdom. And more than that. There is a secret identity between the road to sanctity and the road leading the metaphysician to the affirmation of being;³⁶ perfection in holiness, Marcel says, is metaphysical perfection.

³² Ibid., p. 12; cf. *Etre et Avoir*, p. 165: 'Le méta-problématique, c'est une participation qui fonde ma réalité de sujet (NOUS NE SOMMES PAS A NOUS-MEMES).'

³³ *The Philosophy of Existence*, pp. 14-20; *Etre et Avoir*, pp. 66-80, 126-41.

³⁴ *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 9; *Etre et Avoir*, p. 173; *Journal Métaphysique*, 202.

³⁵ *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 27.

³⁶ *Etre et Avoir*, p. 123.

The explanation is not far to seek. The saint is a person supremely accessible to the real, to others, because he is the perfect manifestation of *disponibilité*; and in the case of the saint, this is charity.³⁷ Freedom is the answer, for I can make myself either opened or closed, sealed or exposed. Man can deny or perpetuate mystery; it is the same with fidelity. *Il est peut-être de mon essence de pouvoir n'être pas ce que je suis; tout simplement de pouvoir me trahir.*³⁸

If we require confirmation of these conclusions, we need only ask, Marcel says, the answers to two questions. Am I my body? Am I my life? The answers constitute some of the most interesting pages he has written.

* * * *

3. The first question to ask is, What is the connexion between me and this arrangement of functioning organs I call my body?³⁹ Marcel observes first that I do not only *use* my body; it is more than an instrument of mediation or action. A hypothesis like this would involve us in the absurdity of a body which is an instrument of another body which is an instrument, *ad infinitum*,⁴⁰ besides suppressing or altering the self. If I think of my body as something I can use, I deincarnate myself, both 'body' and 'me' become separated; they are then objects and irrevocably isolated from each other. The reality my-body no longer exists;⁴¹ as an instrument it at once changes into not-mine, and it can be attributed to anyone else quite indifferently.⁴² Incarnation⁴³ is the term referring to 'being who appears to himself to be linked fundamentally and not accidentally to *his* or *her* body'.⁴⁴ I and my body can no more be dissolved than can existence and the existant. To do so would launch us into the impossibility of thinking of something that is not itself; separation, which is to objectify as Marcel understands it, destroys both terms: there is then only a body, and I am not. For example, if we compare our relationship with other things to that which we have with our body, the distinction emerges with greater precision. My body encroaches upon me, which is the basis of my creaturely condition.⁴⁵

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 99-105.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 154.

³⁹ *Journal Métaphysique*, p. 236.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 237, 263, 252, 323-25; *Reflection and Mystery*, pp. 99-100.

⁴¹ *Journal Métaphysique*, p. 325.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 237, 253, 325.

⁴³ Cf. *Du Refus à l'Invocation*, Gabriel Marcel, pp. 19-55.

⁴⁴ *Reflection and Mystery*, p. 101.

⁴⁵ *Journal Métaphysique*, p. 252.

⁴⁶ *Etre et Avoir*, p. 120.

GABRIEL MARCEL AND THE MYSTERY OF BEING

The two arguments unite, for instrumental mediation is possible only in a world of objects;⁴⁷ and to see the sense in which it can truthfully be said that I am my body is the surest way of surmounting that impossible regress to infinity and the objectification of my body, with the subsequent loss of self-identity. This does not mean a crude materialist identification.⁴⁸ The affirmation — I am my body — is the closest language disabilities will allow us to come to the (at⁴⁹ indissoluble state of 'undividedness' in which I and my body are. Incarnated, I escape objectivity: I cannot dispose of my body. I am my-body, that is the only way to express the inclusiveness of my personal existence; the personal identity contained in 'I' cannot even be approximated without speaking of 'my-body'.

I am not *a* body. When I say I am my-body, I indicate my transcendence of the objective level, I qualify thus as participant in mystery. The world exists for me inasmuch as I am incarnated. I exist for myself, i.e. I am the setting for ontological pursuits, through the non-objectivity of my-body.⁵⁰

If we are inclined to express doubts about the finality of this position, it is no more than Gabriel Marcel himself does.⁵¹ The question — Am I my body? — is but a preface to — Am I my life? — and the puzzle of this query's negative answer gives irrefutable evidence of man's right to claim the ontological mystery as his own. This same question stimulates the thought of Jean Paul Sartre, whom Marcel criticizes in an essay called 'Existence and Human Freedom,'⁵² and the differences distinguishing the two treatments of the same subject cast much light on Marcel's more positive use of similar conclusions.

Sartre, we know, begins by distinguishing between what he calls being-in-itself and being-for-itself: being-in-itself is full, achieved, finished, unable to be more or less than it is; without past or future simply is, and no more about it; it is perfect because it is what it is and can never be anything else. On the other hand, being-for-itself, or conscious being, is being marred by a gap in it, being

⁴⁷ *Journal Métaphysique*, p. 324.

⁴⁸ *Reflection and Mystery*, pp. 100-01.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 101; *Journal Métaphysique*, pp. 236, 239, 252, 305.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 261; cf. p. 325: 'Mon corps se pose comme le repère ou le centre par rapport auquel s'ordonne mon expérience, mon univers.'

⁵¹ *Etre et Avoir*, p. 127.

⁵² Included in *The Philosophy of Existence*, pp. 32-67.

decompressed or impoverished or disfigured, since it is its characteristic to be what it is not and not to be what it is; in short, this is the being of man, scarred by his freedom and certain indeterminacy, a being with a nucleus of nothingness. It is easy to see what discovery exhilarates and terrifies Sartre — man's becoming, his power to initiate movements acquiring additional modes of being, his passage from potentiality to act; man grows, becomes better or worse, and the mind is dizzy by a vision of being so unstable and so uncertain. For by reducing essence to a mere link of the phenomenal appearances of the existent, who is hence existence pure and simple, Sartre finds this human fluidity quite incomprehensible, so that there can be no such thing as a self-instituted organic development towards perfection as a goal to be attained. And anyway, he has said there can be no real essences because there is no God to create them.

Man is constantly in bad faith, Sartre insists, by trying to be what he is not; penalized by his curious 'hollow' structure he is forever doomed to act out a part, an impersonation he can never authenticate. 'Freedom', writes Sartre,⁵³ 'coincides at its root with the non-being which is at the heart of man.' The non-being at the heart of man is precisely his perfectibility, according to St Thomas; it is everything he is not *and of which he is conscious*. The glory of man is now the horror and anguish of his existence. He is nowhere by right. He has no proper place, no proven destiny, and his power of choice, which would seem to indicate his mastery in truth but catapults him into ruin.

Gabriel Marcel uses different terminology and to an entirely different purpose, but when he wonders about his 'life' or his personal identity, the argument turns on the same baffling human factor, his incompleteness, mobility (interior), his 'non-contingency'. Now we know in what sense I *am* my body. The point here, now, is that I am *not* my life which is essentially beyond my grasp, which

⁵³ Cited by Marcel, *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 57; cf. Marcel, *Homo Viator*, pp. 233-59.

⁵⁴ We ought not forget that 'contingency', as employed on pp. 134-36 of *Reflection and Mystery*, does not signify what the Thomist means when he speaks, for example, of the principle of sufficient reason. Contingency in this philosophy means accidental, haphazard, non-causal, without control or direction; a contingent occurrence is the same as a coincidence. Necessity implies the opposite, as it were providential, arranged, planned, anticipated. In man of course it is a sign of his self-direction (cf. *The Philosophy of Existence*, p. 18).

GABRIEL MARCEL AND THE MYSTERY OF BEING

cludes me and indeed eludes, in all directions, itself'. In virtue of its internal mobility my life seems to overflow; I appear at time, to be both more and less than it; extremes meet in me, lock, divides and proliferate. I cannot ignore the daily experience which verifies that my life can be expanded or shrunk, yields to shaping, is responsive to demands that may constitute for it a kind of appeal.⁵⁵ In my life there is flow, continuity; but there would also seem to be, inexplicably, interruption.⁵⁶ And yet my life is not all flow, it is neither all a succession of instants nor all a sustained permanence, nor is it merely a mixture of the two. What does it all signify?

We may assign two points of view from which to observe my life: from the past; from the present that I still am living. To the question 'Who am I?' — both past and present witness the impossibility of giving a direct answer. To say 'I am *this*' or 'I am *that*' would in each one be a gratuitous assumption⁵⁷ incompatible with what accurate observation will tell me of myself. So far as the past is concerned,⁵⁸ my life cannot be recaptured, it resists recall; an irretrievable instantaneity separates it from *hic et nunc*. I can do nothing in that recall of which I am capable — everything but become what I then was: the living centre of the past has vanished and I cannot summon up what is non-existent. To this extent my memory ceases to be an accurate reproduction. Rather, its failure is just that it is only a reproduction: 'My life, now it is no longer living lived, has been changed by magic into its own corpse'.⁵⁹

In another respect the reproduction fails, since my own condition in the present with all its accidents of disposition and varieties of mood and circumstance, afflict the restored image of the past with colours and garments not its own; accretions disguise the past from me. No matter how I approach my life, insofar as it is behind me it is gone, irrevocably; no deposit of works accomplished, series recorded or acts placed, can express my life without betraying it. Since it is not a finished unit like a watch,⁶⁰ my life and I cannot

⁵⁵ *Reflection and Mysterv*, pp. 164-71; cf. *Du Refus à l'Invocation*, pp. 81-110; *Être et Avoir*, pp. 183-82.

⁵⁶ Cf. *Reflection and Mystery*, p. 191.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Journal Métaphysique*, pp. 75-86, 149-52, 163-66, 175-77, 188, 243, 267-68; *Être et Avoir*, pp. 99-105, 121-23, 208-10; *Reflection and Mystery*, pp. 154-61.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁶⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 185-86.

be identified. Except it could be seized, fixed, defined, I cannot say the contrary.

A similar conclusion follows from reflexion on my present situation which is characterized, as we have seen, by freedom; and no being who is free to make or mar himself, to reject or welcome an appeal made to him, can fail to demonstrate through his election that life will not result from a tot of these accounts; and that I — whoever I may be — am clearly something other than this life. The highest proof of the transcendence I enjoy in regard to my life is that noblest of free acts, self-sacrifice.⁶¹ In it my renunciation is converted into a triumphant affirmation of supremacy.

On every side, then, and from every point of view, we discover a mysterious gap or dissimilarity between me and my life, and it is mysterious just because man is a mystery and localizes in himself the very kernel of the metaproblematic. The intimacy I feel with my body, the absence of it with my life, together they draw me from the dismal level of discourse represented by the French word *on*⁶² (Heidegger's *Man*). But where Sartre and the other members of that philosophical family argue from this to man as a *projet*, an absolute freedom manufacturing itself, Gabriel Marcel balks; he will not slip so casually into absurdity. With an admirable integrity and justice he considers all the evidence⁶³ brought him by the phenomenological exploration of human experience. He does not posit the contradictory self-creating myth of Sartre, but a spiritual reality⁶⁴ which to deny would be treachery. We cannot silence, he tells us, the testimony of the being who utters in himself the terrible height, depth and breadth of the mysterious universe of being unique, irreducible, dramatic, the person of man.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 165-68; cf. *Etre et Avoir*, pp. 126-34.

⁶² Cf. *Etre et Avoir*, pp. 182-83.

⁶³ *Reflection and Mystery*, pp. 188-97.

⁶⁴ *Reflection and Mystery*, p. 191.

⁶⁵ First introduced in *Journal Métaphysique*, pp. 173, 219, 301, and later fully elaborated in *Etre et Avoir*, pp. 209-55, the question of being and having restates in colourful language the same positions we have been examining. Having is the order of the problematic, of the object. What I have I can also show (p. 233) and on the object can be shown. Having is the order in which 'within' and 'without' retain their meaning (p. 232), another character of objectivity. The fundamental situation of mystery and problem once clearly marked out and confirmed, it is possible to range over the vast field of human experience and find everywhere illustrations of

REDEEMING THE WORD

by

HUGH DINWIDDY

LIKE the Chinese authors, let us start at the centre. We begin with the Word made flesh, the central event and the central picture in the Christian life. We begin, too, with the primal affirmative 'I am'—'Before Abraham was, I am' . . . a statement made out of time which rings in the ears of man through all time, giving speech from the centre of his being, from man, 'touched in his bower of bone', pressed, 'unteachably after evil, but uttering the truth'—uttering the truth of recognition, 'Thou art', in a poised and twofold answer. For, within the knowledge that God *is*, lies the personal resonance of him who affirms. 'I also am . . . and I am he who has the gift of life and the gift of speech.'

We would consider here the resonance that arises from a meeting between man's life and his speech, in which resonance is as the waves of silence, the unifying and redeeming principle in speech. It is that which—beyond the categories (and if the users of them are not impatient of life, within them), is fully human, and which may turn the word, vibrant and richly clad in truth, in full meaning, to its original home. Yet, in modern terminology 'resonance' is outside the category of 'meaningful speech'. 'For such terms as the omnipotent' and 'the eternal' . . . writes Stuart Chase in *The Tyranny of Words*, 'there are no referents of any sort. Meaningful communication is impossible, however much the user of the term may draw peace or comfort from it.'¹ And it is characteristic of the scientific age that, for want of an accepted theology, it should set out to deflect the course of language from its dedicated service to truth and turn it into the uncreative path of accuracy.

There is no direct meeting of this half-way approach to experience. It is an approach so fearful of commitment, so thin and deadly in its emphasis on the conscious, that it remains a way of shaped and

The Tyranny of Words (Methuen), p. 71.

barren stones. Shorn of resonance, the word is dead, even a Petrouchka is dead. It can bring forth only information, and noise that veils the void of non-experience. 'This' . . . writes Dr Jung, 'the western way of hiding one's own heart under the cloak of the so-called scientific understanding. We do it partly because of the *misérable vanité des savants* which fears and rejects with horror any sign of living sympathy, and partly because an understanding that reaches the feelings might allow contact with the foreign spirit (of the Chinese text) to become a serious experience.'²

Yet a word may be reborn and redeemed from death in genuine creative activity, and herein rests our hope of organic and purposeful writing. 'Examine nature accurately', said Coleridge, 'but write from recollection ; and trust more to your imagination than to your memory.'³ And from Coleridge to Henry James . . . 'I dropped (my idea of "the American") for the time into the deep well of unconscious cerebration'.⁴ Now, those who derive from the leisured age of the past, such men as Charles Morgan and Lord David Cecil, point to the lack of fullness in modern creative writing. Lord David Cecil speaks of 'The Creative Imagination'—'the power, that is, which generates that union of artist and material in which alone the child of artistic life is born'. In modern novels, he claims, the writer's imagination 'never gets to work on the facts; the act of creation is never performed'.⁵ This, if it be so, is mere 'memory work' would be the verdict of Coleridge who writes of establishing 'a centre, if it were, a sort of nucleus in the reservoir of the soul'.⁶ Therein is the slowly forming growth of distilled experience, 'the confluence of our recollections'⁷ which is later to be released in the freedom of word and image.

We shall speak later of the freedom of the word and of its proper use of containing experience. We can now point only to the need, indeed, the necessity of the word born of experience to come forth from the depths of silence and slow time. Its redemption, flowing back into the responsible life of those who know that speech is

² *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. Commentary by C. G. Jung (Kegan Paul), p. 77.

³ Table Talk, 22nd September 1830.

⁴ Henry James, *Works* (New York Edition), II, vii.

⁵ *Early Victorian Novelists*. Pelican Edition, p. 19.

⁶ *Biographia Epistolaris* II, 182.

⁷ *Biographia Epistolaris* II, 182.

REDEEMING THE WORD

ft, is found simply in its proper, dedicated use. To-day it is more eedful than ever in the past to keep our minds firmly centred on his, for the writer is confronted with the sundering polarity of the erile and scientifically objective approach, and of the reaction to his which follows the line of mere reportage. In the latter the word weighed down with the leaden wings of indigestible experience, and so frequently, of unresolved misery. 'How tired one gets of the ontemporary *look-how-nasty!*' writes Marghahita Laski in her eview column of *The Observer*.⁸ Here, it seems, is a world of self-estruction in which there is, literally, no redeeming feature. Mind eturns to mud. Yet, only if the word, embodied with understanding f experience, and touched with the pulse of renewed life, goes orth freely to testify to the truth can it be redeemed. And, if each ew creative work is known in the darkness of a birth, it is also in e nature of a resurrection.

The writer lives largely on facts, but he can only take in as many s he can know with feeling, if he is to utter with feeling, and if his ords are to ring with the resonance of life. Sometimes we can eak of the 'inchoate' word, in the sense that feeling has not found articulation, and the growth of a genuine writer is a movement r which, as the word assimilates, experience, it is freed from the arkness of its birth. In this context we think of mastery, and the ecently published collected works of Dylan Thomas illustrate the ecreasing inward control of material that is the mark of all, let us ay, 'nuclear' creation. It is not that we have lost the power and he faculty to make independent works, but rather that we have lost he unifying habit of contemplation in our work and in our observing f nature. We have, as a result, lost the means of bringing 'power' nd 'faculty' together, and this is, perhaps, the most frightening utcome of the twentieth century development. For the momentum f power to create, unattached to the faculty of creation sinks to he muddiest part of ourselves, while the faculty of creation, inert y itself, is given over to the cold barbarity of technique. And we e that the more standarized and sanitary life becomes the more olent and sex-dominated is the reading of the masses.

And how, in the midst of this contradiction and in its ensuing oise, is the word to be returned in affirmation to its original home?

⁸ 11th January 1953.

How is one to say 'Thou art?' And here we must look rather more widely and more personally at the relation between the word and man's life. It is not until the present age that man has ceased to think of his life as a pilgrimage. It will be helpful to look at mountains with Frank Smythe.

'To spend a holiday climbing as many mountains as possible may give cause for satisfaction in one sense, but it resembles too perilously the antics of the American tourist who declared that by wearing rubber-soled shoes he was able to "do" the National Gallery in forty minutes'⁹ . . . Modern mountaineering literature is for the most part appallingly dull. The writers of articles in climbing publications appear incapable of expressing their feelings'¹⁰. . . And then there is this conversation piece, "I've just been up and down the Matterhorn in six hours". 'The elderly mountaineer eyed him in silence for a moment, then', "Why?" 'he enquired quietly'.¹¹

And we may say, in reply, that it is largely because he does not treat his climb as a pilgrimage, and we return to Frank Smythe for confirmation. 'The hills should be approached in the spirit of a pilgrim approaching a shrine, an attitude receptive of their charms and beauties.'¹² They are to be known *personally*,¹³ he continues, and when we arrive at the top, he urges us to 'absorb and be absorbed by the beauty of the surroundings'¹⁴ rather than to fill our time with the trivialities of checking map references. It is understandable that a man should write dully of a dull subject, but so gripped is he by the harrowing discipline of modern scientific objectivity that he cannot seem to kill even the splendour of a mountain with dead words. But it is his timid, febrile, verifying, unreflective approach that makes this possible. Briefly, let it be said again that a man who cannot assimilate his experience can only give forth information.

In contrast, the pilgrim is one who, though drawn towards the summit by a metaphysical hope within him, even as man, through suffering, is drawn to what Dom Sebastian Moore has called the 'near mystery'¹⁵ of death in mastery over his life, so does he enrich his way in preparation for the end of his journey. And the mastery

⁹ *The Mountain Vision* (Hodder and Stoughton), pp. 9-10.

¹⁰ *The Mountain Vision* (Hodder and Stoughton), p. 15.

¹¹ *The Mountain Vision* (Hodder and Stoughton), p. 23.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 6. ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 82. ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁵ DOWNSIDE REVIEW, Autumn 1952, 'Reflexions on Death'.

REDEEMING THE WORD

at we speak of here is only to be understood in relation to the reality of the Word made flesh and in its mysterious penetration of our lives during the course of the pilgrimage. The rhythm of this movement in man is one of deepening, of inward knowing of the self that 'in awakening to man, we recognize *the Man*.'¹⁶

To turn to a world where this recognition is not felt is indeed to head the paths of absurdity. Here, fascinated by the end, we are held by the numbing wind of competition. The experience on the way is lost in fighting against the freedom of the 'other man', or against some self-imposed bogie, and the end is seen, not as a qualitative change, but as 'another scalp', a piece of information to hand to one's rival. In this kind of living, there is no feeling in the word, because there is no personal experience to record. A muscular 'I' climbs the Matterhorn and a stop-watch 'I' records the fact. And there is, lying behind this attitude to experience, a numbing approach to death, analagous physically to the '*misérable vanité des savants*' of which Dr Jung speaks. It can be put in a few words: 'If death is an experience of suffering, and no matter how we would protect ourselves from it, we have intimations of suffering (death) in life, let us numb ourselves by action and crowded living that we may not be able to feel'. And even the experience of achievement has no fullness in it, for the end is lost in exhaustion.

Yet, pathetically, Petrouchka-like, there is, in all this hurry, an imitation of true living. Because, inwardly, it knows itself to be an imitation, it is torn by contradiction, unrelieved by the nobility of suffering; in its fear it is fascinated by death. And its death is not the death of 'decreation', of which Simone Weil has written, but of total destruction.

Absence of heart — as in public buildings,
Absence of mind — as in public speeches,
Absence of work — as in goods intended for the public,

All tell-tale signs that a Chimera has just dined
On someone else; of him, poor foolish fellow,
Not a scrap is left, not even his name.¹⁷

Such is the unredeemed, wordless, whimpering death of negation.

¹⁶ DOWNSIDE REVIEW, Autumn 1952, 'Reflexions on Death'.

¹⁷ 'The Chimera' by W. H. Auden. Published in *The Times Literary Supplement*.

We have to learn to affirm that we *are*, and that we are more than mere users of the efficiency and security and barbarity of techniques. For to say 'I feel' is to be centred with the whole personality about an experience, to be able to express it is the *sign* that it has been assimilated. Therein lies the inner relation between man and the word. There too is the pattern of redemption; and the pilgrimage, the way of redemption, lies in the creative power of suffering, stretched over the mountains and into the furthest sea of experience.

With this in mind a man may speak of being 'out of centre' with a happening in his life, when he finds himself saying 'I *ought* to feel this or that'. And here the word betrays the momentary or permanent disruption in the person of the speaker. With a flash of insight Simone Weil wrote, 'To say to Christ as St Peter did — "I will always be faithful to Thee"; is to deny him already, for it is to suppose that the source of fidelity is in ourselves and not in grace'.¹⁸ We detect instantly the boastful and turbulent use of words, for between these words and the experience that gave them their misshapen birth is situated an abyss.

Yet we have to recognize the 'flow back' of meaning from words into the minds of those who use them and of those who read them. If we speak of being 'influenced' by the words of another, or of oneself, we are saying that we grow into their meaning, that they become real inside ourselves and bring about a conversion of attitude or knowledge. If a man says, 'I am not afraid', when inwardly, he is extremely frightened, he may find that a challenge from inside or outside compels him towards a personal actualization of the words he has uttered. He was afraid: he is so no longer. The ways in which this flow back can operate are manifold and intricate. The returning word naturally meets other voices, thus, if he says — 'I am a sinner', there is one voice that may say, 'You are made like that, so why try to be anything else', and another which will say 'That is a bad thing to be; be so no longer'. However far one extends this, and however many relations between the man and the word are made, what is important to know is that words have this boomerang quality of returning to the speaker, and that they are written in *The Book of Life*. Man, then, has a profound

¹⁸ *Gravity and Grace* (Routledge and Kegan Paul). Introduction by Gustave Thibon p. xxii.

REDEEMING THE WORD

responsibility to the word, re-incarnating it in experience at each new creative venture, and since the word binds a man to a statement about himself, the interplay between man and his word is a large part of the redemptive process in mankind. For, though words play with the appearance of things, if we will listen to them carefully, they are at the same time confronting us with reality.

I believe in God — a verbal statement.

I should like to believe in God — States of mind

I ought to believe in God behind the words

I believe in God — an actualized statement.

But this is too neat, for the reality *in the word* is always more than one can understand — one can hope only for a deepening of understanding. Herein is the mystery of language, for the meaning of words is always more than either the speaker or the listener can know. We speak of overtones, of 'self' expression, and slowly come to recognize the man in us. If the word has come from the depths, we can return strengthened by the achievement of creation to the 'whole work', through the word into the depths in us. For that is 'catharsis' but a following of the word into the depths of oneself? And to do this is to deepen the personally integrating and redemptive movement inside ourselves.

We are open to the freedom of the dedicated word, for it carries concreteness to the point of ineffability, and when we are touched and moved by the sound and truth of words we know that a true communication has taken place. We are lost, lifted out of time, deprived even of the gift of speech. Then, in silence, we wait for the words to flow back from ourselves, and they carry the pulse and quality of our living with them. The word is free to enter the heart if the heart is not hard, and if it be not timid, if we know — and here we are at the level of ineffability — if we know that love suffused with tears. The word is, then, as 'the voice crying in the wilderness', and its freedom and power of penetration to enter the human heart is in the guise of a 'forerunner' to the Word made flesh. And herein lies the actualizing of redemption working through the pattern of man's relation to his word.

The participation of the word in man's redemption must eventually be brought to this — the point of ineffability — when, in the expansion of his love, man accepts full human responsibility

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

and is henceforward carried by his love, moves in his love, is moved by it. Through the word he begins by making a personal relationship with experience, whether it is of another human being, a book or a mountain. We mean by this that there is nothing between the writer or the speaker of words and his outer world that cannot be dissolved in the joy and pain of love. The relation is integral and in the last analysis, the 'referent'— and this point can scarcely be too frequently made — is man himself. For 'the point at issue' says a character in *The Walnut Trees of Altenburg* 'is no longer the history of man but the nature of every individual'.¹⁹ This has always been the writer's particular terrain, but since the protecting walls of an accepted way of life have been withdrawn, he and his subject are exposed and naked on the mountain side. We cannot now discuss the question generally but require simply to note that his own private problem of work, that of his personal relation to words, to nature, to man and to God, spreading outward from himself, has become the central problem of the philosophy of existence. It is not too much to say that in the quality of this relation lies the future of each individual, and he is now required to work it out at a deeper level than in more settled days.

¹⁹ *The Walnut Trees of Altenburg* by André Malraux (John Lehman), p. 110.

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER AND THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LITERATURE OF ANCIENT ROME IN THE MIDDLE AGES¹

by

PROFESSOR PAUL LEHMANN

THE historical facts which are to be the subject of this lecture, although familiar to us, are not in the first instance self-evident. St Benedict did not, in his 'rule', order his disciples to be guardians of learning or to propagate the secular writings of antiquity. He was certainly not an uneducated man; he presupposed that the monastic community had a library, he insisted upon the study of books, and speaks of a school. Still, we must imagine that both these institutions, library and school, were at this time very unpretentious; we must not assume that the texts of pagan writers, of great orators, or of brilliant historians were available there and that young and old alike were urged to study them. The community of monks devoted itself to the services in the monastic church; the cultivation of learning was not their immediate aim. Since Mabillon's time much has been written and disputed about the *studia monastica*, about the early schools and libraries of western monachism. It is not my intention to pursue this subject here. I will rather begin with my personal belief that the interest in learning only gradually struck roots. The mere reference to Cassiodorus, his scholastic aims, his textbook, the *Institutiones*, and his model monastery of Vivarium — these things are not sufficient to prove that studies had played an important part amongst the Benedictines from the start. The highly cultivated Cassiodorus, who wished to be and was patron and director of the library and scriptorium in his monastic foundation, is, as all the available evidence of the sixth century shows, to be regarded as an exceptional phenomenon, and the success of his praiseworthy

A public lecture delivered in the University of Liverpool on 3rd March 1952, by the late Dr Downey, Archbishop of Liverpool, in the Chair.

efforts did not lie in the combination of the religious discipline of Montecassino with the learning of Vivarium and its love of books. The monastery of Cassiodorus does not seem to have continued very long in existence. Only fragments of its manuscripts and reflexions of their tradition survived the centuries. But once it had found literary expression, the splendid idea of the scientific care of books could be taken up afresh at a later date. And this in my opinion was done for the first time with success amongst the Anglo-Saxon Benedictines, from the time when Theodore and Hadrian came from the south and gave new invigorating energy to the Church and to education in England and, as Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* shows us, attracted Anglo-Saxons to the continent, not only to pray at shrines, but also to acquire books and to study monastic institutions partly at first hand and partly by reading. Cassiodorus' views on the subject of library and scriptorium had in my opinion become firmly rooted amongst the Anglo-Saxons by about A.D.700. And from this time there develops in the English monasteries and chapters a striking abundance of secular writings. Aldhelm, and Bede, and others frequently quote from the classics. In his epic poem dedicated to the Church at York Alcuin (+ 804) draws up an imposing list of authors who were available to him in the middle of the eighth century, including Virgil, Lucan, Statius, Justinus, Pliny, Cicero, and various grammarians. Since we possess no original manuscripts of secular Roman writings of the pre-Carolingian or early Carolingian periods, which in England had been preserved or copied, Alcuin's list is not without significance; it is an indication that when he was teaching in York there was an impressive series of classical texts and that these were used for instruction by him. One might say without risk of contradiction that the manuscript of Livy, written in Italy in the fifth century and now in Vienna, came to England in the seventh-eighth centuries, was then taken by an Anglo-Saxon missionary to the Utrecht district and then in the early ninth century taken from the Netherlands to the monastery at Lorsch, which from of old had priests and possessions in the Netherlands. On the whole, however, the secular classical texts saved by the Anglo-Saxons, often transcribed into minuscule, were preserved only in copies in Anglo-Saxon colonies on the continent such as Fulda, and sometimes the

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER

leographer can only identify them by reference to mistakes made in reading the insular script or in rendering abbreviations. The contribution of the Irish to the preservation and passing on of classical literature is probably much smaller than that of the Anglo-Saxon Benedictines and secular priests, who to a very large extent prepared the way for the Carolingian Renaissance by their cultivation of the ideals of education, and of the careful transcription and interpretation both of secular and of Christian classical texts, and through personalities like St Boniface and Alcuin who never lost touch with their homeland, even when working on the continent, and who also provided for the transport of books from their island home. Unfortunately it is seldom that we can trace the individual steps in the process of transcription, and we have to improve still further our methods of textual criticism and paleographical research. In places which were exposed to particularly strong Anglo-Saxon influence, such as Fulda, Hersfeld, or Mainz, we find that the secular classical literary tradition is particularly strong, we need not necessarily attribute all of this to Anglo-Saxon precedent and example. But we must in every case reckon with this possibility. It is extremely regrettable that there is not so much as one Anglo-Saxon library, neither York for instance, nor Durham, that possesses a detailed catalogue of the period between 750 and 800. If we had such a catalogue, and not merely Alcuin's enumeration in verse, then we could compare its contents with that, e.g. of the Fulda library of about 830 and attempt many a conclusion.

Before our thoughts finally turn again to the Continent, let me say a few words about the later fate of the old English libraries. Whilst the monastic libraries in France and Germany rapidly expanded during, and after, the ninth century, the Danish raids of this time with their burning and plundering resulted in the complete loss of many English libraries, so that we are unable to trace anything at all of them. English monasticism went through its bitterest period in the ninth and tenth centuries. The reformers, especially Dunstan, who was connected with the reform movement of Fleury-sur-Loire, had to start again almost from the beginning. They were unable to restore the old abundant supply of books. When, however, we see the book collections of Glastonbury, Bury St Edmunds, Christ Church and St Augustine's at Canterbury, of Durham, Norwich,

Reading, Rochester, St Alban's, Worcester, and other Benedictine establishments, once again plentiful and rich in classical texts, which deserve the careful attention of modern philologists—we must realize that these are new treasures, not those from which Mainz, Fulda, Hersfeld, etc., were supplied. After the conquest of 1066 England came within the Norman-French cultural sphere, and in the twelfth century thousands of Englishmen studied at French schools and brought back books to England. It is very instructive to study the traditional, historical, and palaeographical connexion between England and northern France in the manuscripts of the two countries, and particularly in classical texts. Take, for instance Cicero in the Oxford critical edition, leave the ancient manuscript of Carolingian times aside for the moment and merely compare what the editor says about the French and English manuscripts of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries. If a close relationship can be established, then try to explain it historically. However, to-day we must turn our thoughts back to the Carolingian period. When the young Boniface was a teacher, he examined with the aid of a grammar-book for schools, which we still have, and which show us that the cultivation of Latin in his native land was a particular concern to him and his followers. As a missionary in Germany he had, of course, other and greater cares, but the thought of making arrangements regarding scriptorium, library, and school in his continental centre in Mainz or his continental foundation at Fulda similar to those he had experienced in his homeland, must have occurred to him.

The broader and more settled life became in the Anglo-Saxon settlements on German soil, the more there arose educational establishments similar to the Anglo-Saxon Latin schools. And as Boniface had this and that book brought from his English homeland to the German forests, so there followed in the whole second half of the eighth century an enrichment of the German monasteries and churches by England — and not least in the matter of classical texts which can be proved to have been available and interpreted in England but which for the German sphere of activity were something new. The countries on the Maas, Rhine, Main, and Danube from the North Sea to Lake Constance, were not only fields of Christian missionary activity but increasingly also countries of

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER

Christian culture, nourished on the Classics; countries in which school, scriptorium, and library were firmly connected with the Church. And this became naturally all the more evident when the Frankish realm, already in process of integration, came under the guidance of a ruler like Charlemagne with a great thirst for culture. For he brought lovers of culture from various parts of Europe, amongst them the Anglo-Saxon Alcuin, whom he put in charge of his educational reforms, and who as a Benedictine monk had experienced the flourishing period of the Christian-Benedictine development of Latin culture in England. At least from the eighties of the eighth century the monasteries in central and southern Europe came more and more to realize that a Benedictine monk must combine the prayers and chants in church and refectory with work in the scriptorium, study in the library, and teaching in the school. My time to-day is too short to allow me to speak further about the instruction given in classical literature, etc. and I shall, therefore, confine myself to a few examples to show how the monks of St Benedict inherited classical literature and passed it on to others, and in what ways this took place.

So many cultural influences have come together in what is now France that it is often difficult, indeed impossible, to explain a definite phenomenon as being the result of one particular influence, even in literary history. In the early Middle Ages there was still plenty of later classical tradition on French soil. There were juridical and legal texts, for instance, in Lyons, and ancient copies of Livy's writings in Southern France. Many of these went astray and many suddenly came into circulation with the awakening of cultural and intellectual interests. We are not in a position to say to what influence or personality this awakening is to be attributed. It is the exception to be able to point to a definite man like Lupus of Ferrières, who searched and had others search for classical texts in French, German, English, and Italian libraries, and found much that was of importance. But how does the old burial place of the French kings, the abbey of Saint-Denis near Paris, come to possess classical texts dating from ancient times — such, for example, as the ancient text of Virgil in capital script? We do not know by what paths this old manuscript found its way into a mediaeval monastery. From the beginning Corbie on the Somme had connexions

with the Anglo-Saxons and Irish as well as with Upper Italy and Burgundy. This northern French monastery had energetically availed itself of these connexions since the eighth century. We are in no way surprised that codices of the first importance for Cæsar's *Bellum Gallicum*, for the *Bellum Jugurthinum* and *Catilinæ*, for Sallust, for Pliny's Natural History, for the poems of Lucretius, Statius, and for the work on agriculture by Columella, among others, passed through Corbie. Already in Carolingian times we see the Benedictines of Fleury-sur-Loire playing a considerable part in the transmission of the texts of Cicero, Horace, Phaedrus, Justin, Quintilian, Valerius Maximus, etc. The richest source of books for Fleury was clearly Italy. At Tours, which at the time of its great historian Gregory (about A.D. 600) was anything but a centre of classical education, the internal need for reform was reinforced in the second half of the eighth century by fresh inspiration from Corbie, England, Italy, and finally in the ninth century from Germany. About 800 we find Corbie lending the monastery of Martin at Tours for copying purposes a manuscript of the third decade of Livy still preserved in Paris. The copy thus made, now in Rome, transmits the text of Livy. In Tours the famous Anglo-Saxon Alcuin, devoted his efforts vigorously to a reform of the school system with its cultivation of classical form and content, and the expansion of the Tours library by copies of works available in Anglo-Saxon lands; and he formed close connexions with the Benedictines in Fulda. If classical Latin and some of the texts of the Ancients were a firmly established element of Christian education in the middle ages, this is the merit of Alcuin, the Anglo-Saxon counsellor of Charlemagne — a merit he shares with the Benedictine monasteries in Germany and France, which from about 800 devoted themselves energetically to the tasks of education and looked to that school, scriptorium, and library became and remained important and normal parts especially of the Benedictine monasteries on the Continent as well as in England, just as Cassiodorus had desired and planned for library and scriptorium in Italy.

The conscious transmission and utilization of ancient, especially Latin, literature by the Christian system of education, research, and training in the arts in Europe, was not at the beginning an easy task in the central European countries. The Irish missionaries, w

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER

Since the days of Columba had wandered through the continent, the Anglo-Saxons, Willibrord, Boniface, and others (whatever their names may be) were learned people, who brought their books with them or sent for them. The first tasks, however, which they had to undertake were the difficult ones of Christianization and monastic and ecclesiastical consolidation in regions that we can hardly imagine to-day in their then state of desolation and danger. But during the last decades of the eighth century there came the time when the Benedictine pupils of the Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionaries on the continent, whom their teachers had by then fully furnished with knowledge, skill, and material, could tackle the cultural tasks they had recognized, and which Charlemagne and his advisers had propounded.

I shall now sum up some of the traits of the German classical tradition.

Eagerness of reception and dissemination are characteristics of this tradition; it is these, however, that make it more difficult to establish and explain certain interrelations of texts, so that one must be careful in making generalizations; the more so, as the sources are fragmentary and research at present incomplete.

It was natural that the exchange of books with Italy, the homeland of classical Latin literature, existed at first only in the south and south-west of Germany, in the monasteries and abbeys round Lake Constance and in Bavaria. The monastery of St Gallen has preserved for us the fragments of one of our oldest manuscripts of Virgil, written in capital script in about the fourth century. Some scholars would have us believe that the codex, which as they admit was written in Italy, was brought into the valley of the Steinach by Irish monks from their home. This case shows us how difficult it is to ascertain whether a text reached Germany from Italy directly or indirectly. Direct importation of books from Upper Italy is a fact not at all remarkable in the case of the monastery of St Gallen, which had had connexions with Bobbio since the days of Columba; direct importation is certain in the case of MS *Sangallensis* 912, a palimpsest, which in addition to very old fragments of a Latin psalter and of Jeremiah contains parts of the grammar by Donatus of the tenth century, some ancient medical prescriptions and a double leaf of a manuscript of Terence of the fourth century, the

oldest in existence. The cursive minuscule of the early seventh century, which is found on several pages, shows us that the code had been for some time in Upper Italy, presumably at Bobbio before, already as a fragment, it was taken to the monastery at St Gallen. *Codex St Gallensis* 908, the 'king of palimpsests', with fragments of Merobaudes, the *Mulo-medicine* by Vegetius, and others may also be traced back to the valley of the Po. If, even at the beginning of the Carolingian Renaissance, we come across important at times even singularly old, texts at St Gallen, we must explain it by the communications existing between the monastery and Northern Italy.

We may mention at least one example of an ancient manuscript of Italian origin that came into the possession of the monastery at Reichenau directly from Italy. It is the oldest textual evidence for books 11 — 15 of Pliny's Natural History written in magnificent uncial letters. The book is believed to have come into the district of Lake Constance from Verona after, in the eighth century, most pages had been re-used for copying a text by Jerome in the Luxeuil type of script. The Middle-and North-German libraries, however, were also very early in a position to obtain from Italy manuscripts of classical literature and did obtain them. For Rome was not only the ecclesiastical centre of Christendom, but as such also a market for books. Furthermore bishops, priests, and princes made pilgrimages to the south again and again; and finally, monks travelled frequently between the old monasteries of Germany and such ancient places as Bobbio, Verona or Monte Cassino. All this promoted the exchange of books. In most cases, however, when a manuscript written in Italy is found in the possession of a German monastery it is difficult to say whether it came to us directly over the Alps. At any rate, many an Italian codex must have made a long pilgrimage, before eventually it reached German soil, its way having lain from Italy first via France, Ireland or England.

Significant is the following fact: about 1527 Symon Grynaeus, German, found in the monastery of St Nazarius at Lorsch on the Bergstrasse the first five books of the fifth decade of Livy, the only remaining source for this part of Livy's history of Rome. Through the library of Count von Zimmern the codex came to the Castle of Ambras in Tyrol, and from there to the library of the Emperor

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER

Vienna. In the middle ages it had been in the Middle Rhine region for centuries; it was, however, written in Italy in the fifth century. How had the monastery at Lorsch come to possess it? Well, the manuscript contains an entry that shows that it had been owned by a bishop of Utrecht in the eighth century. Seeing that the possessions of the monastery of Lorsch in Carolingian times stretched as far as the Netherlands, and as we know (for example) that in 814 the books of the Dutch priest Gerward, among them the *Historia Philippicae* by Justin and a Virgil from the district of Rijnswegen were taken to Lorsch, it is fairly clear that Lorsch came to possess its oldest copy of Justin, perhaps also an ancient Virgil and the ancient Livy from Holland. Among the books of Gerward, some of which are still extant in the Vatican library, there are manuscripts of Anglo-Saxon origin; and the Netherlands were, we know, one of the missionary fields of the Anglo-Saxons in the eighth century. We may conjecture that the copies of Virgil and Livy, in origin Italian, were brought to Lorsch by one of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries from a pilgrimage to Rome or from England, where other works — the Justinus manuscript, for instance — had been transcribed into the 'insular' script.

To discover in a similar way the fate of others among the oldest manuscripts is often impossible; hence we must try to avoid over-simplification of the influences at work if we wish to understand the growth of a library and the history of the transmission of the texts. If we once more turn back to the monasteries at St Gallen and Reichenau, we must realize that especially in Carolingian times, which saw a rapid growth of their libraries, secular classical texts were more often obtained and copied through relations with France (Paris, Denis, Tours, and other places), with the Irish and Anglo-Saxons, and above all through friendly relations with other German monasteries and chapters, than they were from Italy. We must remember the fact that the monastery at St Gallen as well as that of Reichenau possess exceptionally numerous grammars of the later centuries of antiquity and of the early middle ages, copied into the insular script of the eighth and ninth centuries; this is evidenced by manuscripts both complete and fragmentary that have been preserved, as well as by old catalogues. No. 904 in the library at St Gallen is an Irish copy of Priscian, which had been at Cologne

during the rule there of bishop Gunther (830-869), and only the came to St Gallen; and MS Karlsruhe Aug. CXXXII contains the same grammar in the Irish type of writing of the ninth century together with Old-Irish glosses. These facts together remind us that in the eighth and ninth centuries both these libraries were considerably enriched by copies of medical and literary writings of antiquity, only some of which came from Italy. In the case of those texts of ancient Roman origin, for which, thanks to the discoveries of the Italian humanists, the monasteries near Lake Constance have become famous, we can see that they either derive from one definite copy that had been in Germany since the Carolingian epoch, or that they have a common ancestor with another manuscript of proved Central-German origin. Cod. Vat. Lat. 3277 from Fulda is the only extant medieval manuscript of the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus, a work which in the early middle ages was traceable only in Bobbio, is the source of the St Gallen manuscript discovered in 1416 by Poggio, of which he secured copies. Similarly it was in the Carolingian manuscript of St Gallen that Poggio discovered the *Astronomica* of Manilius. It would appear that this work, in the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, found its way from the area of Lake Constance into Lorraine; but its propagation remained meagre until the Poggio copies began to circulate.

The epic, in which Silius Italicus dealt with the Punic War, only became known through Poggio's discovery of a transcript somewhere in the district of Lake Constance. There existed, however, in the Cathedral library at Cologne a closely related Carolingian codex of the same work, which had been collated in the sixteenth century but was then lost. The 'Silvae' of Statius, on the other hand, known only through Poggio's copies of a manuscript of St Gallen or Reichenau, which unfortunately subsequently disappeared. The sole surviving copy of the best edition of the book of medical instruction by Quintus Serenus Sammonicus, that originated probably in northern Italy and was dedicated by one Jacobus to King Charlemagne, is to be found in a ninth century manuscript of St Gallen, now in Zürich, which in turn is derived from a copy presented to the Reichenau librarian, Reginbert, and made use of by Walahfrid Strabo. In early times Serenus was also available at Murbach. We would give a great deal to know more about the

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER

classical manuscripts possessed by this old Alsatian monastery than that the ninth century catalogue and a few later references tell us. Murbach possessed many manuscripts of classical antiquity and its literary possessions show many marks of similarity both with those of Reichenau, a monastery which also reaches back to Martin, and with Fulda and many other ancient foundations. Murbach possessed the extremely rare poems of Lucretius, otherwise available only in the Fulda-Mainz sphere of cultural influence, in the monasteries around Lake Constance and, outside Germany, in St Bertin, Corbie, and Bobbio. Murbach also had the *Historiae Philippicae* of Justinus, a work which, originally available perhaps in Lorsch and Fulda, spread thence toward the south-west. In the Murbach catalogue was further to be found the *Historia Augusta* edited later by Erasmus of Rotterdam, extant for us only in two copies earlier in date than the Italian Renaissance — the *Codex Ambergensis* of Fulda and its west-German original, the *Codex Galatinus*. Murbach had the works of Vitruvius, whose widespread influence, extending as far as Reichenau and St Gallen in the one direction and Cologne in the other, maybe, traced back to Fulda. Again, Murbach possessed the only authenticated copy of the complete collection of Virgil's shorter poems, the copy which in the tenth and eleventh centuries continued to be influential in Lorraine and in France, even though in the ninth century an inferior but vigorous branch of the same tradition had sprouted from Fulda at Hersfeld. Thanks to Beatus Rhenanus we still possess from the *Codex Murbacensis* information regarding variant readings in Pliny's Natural History. And the text of Velleius Paterculus, that of such importance for the struggles of the Romans with the Germans, is known only from the first edition of 1520, based on the transcript of a Murbach manuscript, from Albert Burer's collation of the manuscript and from the copy that Bonifatius Murbach made from the first copy of the Murbach transcript completed in 1515.

And what shall be said of Fulda, the favourite foundation of the great Anglo-Saxon, St Boniface? It was the flowering of classical studies under Hrabanus Maurus that prepared the way for that fruitful instruction of the clergy that was early noticeable in Fulda. This developed from about 810 onwards after the abbots of

Fulda had begun consciously to follow Charlemagne's educational aims, after Alchvine, the emperor's Anglo-Saxon advisor had established connexions with the monastery, and eminent Fulda scholars (for example Einhard and Hrabanus himself) had been sent to the Frankish court and to Tours, in just the same way as men from the west came for instruction to Fulda. This fact suggests that we must not overlook the limits of the purely English influence on the formation of valuable collections of classical works, very great though this certainly was. The reason for Fulda's greatness as a centre of transmission lay in the fact that it not only replenished itself directly or indirectly from the rich sources of classical works in Britain but also received additions from western and southern Europe. In the same way, St Gallen not only received and copied manuscripts of Bobbio but also drew on the same further sources.

The monastery of Fulda, St Boniface's greatest German foundation, was joined in a brotherhood of prayer to the monasteries on the Loire, to the neighbouring communities and chapters in Mainz, Speyer, Worms, Lorsch, and to the rather more distant south-west German centres of St Gallen, Constance, Reichenau and Murbach; and these communities also exchanged members and books. The services performed after the close of the eighth century by the powerful and intellectually vigorous monastery of Fulda in preserving and transmitting ancient Roman literature are attested by such a wealth of facts that—despite disturbing gaps in the evidence—I can only deal with them partially and by indication.

First, we may notice Fulda's great and varied possessions of ancient manuals for the study of language and grammar. This may be accounted for by the general interest taken there in education—a fact observable also in other connexions—and particularly by the connexions with the Anglo-Saxon world. Next to this what strikes us particularly in the monastery's predilection for works of history and the writing of history. This may also, at least to some extent, be due to Anglo-Saxon influence; for Bede had established the pattern of historical narrative, and ever since the seventh century the Anglo-Saxons had been absorbed in a lively study of works of ancient history and had been bringing the calendars, martyrologies and encyclopædic chronicles into connexion with the recording of historical events. The first German who

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER

attempted to draw a literary portrait of a Germanic king, Einhard, the biographer of Charlemagne, found in the library at Fulda a chief source of information. As a boy he was at the monastic school there and maintained his connexion with the monastery in later years also. It is commonly believed that he found the model for his biography of Charles among the Fulda codices. And, indeed, Fulda possessed Suetonius' lives of the Roman Emperors. In fact, however, the story of the handing down of Suetonius' writings needs further investigation. Of the two extant ancient codices of the *Historia Augusta*, which supplements Suetonius, one, at present in Bamberg, was certainly written, to judge by its Anglo-Saxon script, in the Fulda region. Further, the history of the text of Ammianus Marcellinus' historical work takes us back to the area of Fulda and Lorsch. But it is Tacitus of all the ancient historians whose name has been most closely associated with Fulda or with Fulda's rival, Hersfeld, and with Corvey. In the fifteenth century Nicolaus Cusanus rescued from Hassia the *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus* of Suetonius and the lesser writings of Tacitus — amongst these his *Germania*, which has for us in Germany an attraction of its own. Not until the twentieth century did there come to light in Italy a few more leaves of this in a ninth century manuscript. In the meantime the Renaissance texts gathered from manuscripts in Hessian and other German monasteries had begun to exercise an extraordinarily stimulating and constructive influence. Since Carolingian times medieval scholars had neglected the *Germania*. The original of the so called Hersfeld manuscript was probably either in Fulda or in Mainz. It is sometimes said that no one save Einhard read the Annals and the *Germania* — an assertion of dubious validity. It is, however, correct to say that Rudolf of Fulda, a pupil and admirer of Hrabanus Maurus, copied the *Germania*. Fulda presumably also possessed the first books of the Annals of Tacitus. The sole manuscript from which our text of this derives was taken in the early sixteenth century from Corvey to Florence and its script shows the closest affinity to that of the codices in Fulda and Mainz. In the first part of the so-called Annals that appeared about 887 in Mainz mention is made of Tacitus, and his Annals are quoted from. It may be further mentioned in passing that probably the other part of the Annals also and the Histories,

though in fact preserved in Monte Cassino, derive ultimately from Fulda. Hersfeld was apparently the only place which, apart from and earlier than Monte Cassino, possessed Frontinus' *De Aquarum Ductu Urbis Romae*.

If we are justified in tracing back to Fulda the script of the Corvey manuscript of Tacitus' Annals now in Florence, the same must be said of the manuscript there of Pliny's letters, since both originally formed a single volume. This is supported by the fact that a code written in Fulda, which found its way to the Bavarian State Library in Munich via St Emmeram in Regensburg, contains two letters of Pliny in a ninth century script.

Many other non-historical works of ancient classical literature might also be mentioned, which were to be found in the Fulda Library: Cicero's letters, the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus, the Commentary to Virgil by Servius, the treatise on cooking by Apicius, the works of Columella, *Marcellus Medicus* and others.

New researches are trying — not without success — to reduce the importance of Hersfeld and Corvey for the transmission of texts and underline the surely big part of Fulda.

The works I have quoted are merely some examples out of many. For the history of the transmission of ancient Roman literature much more could still be said about each of the monasteries referred to above. And many further Benedictine monasteries could be mentioned, from Monte Cassino in the south throughout the whole of Italy, in the Alpine districts and beyond them to Bavaria and Swabia, through France and Germany up to the far north, that have in some way played their part in the preservation of the spiritual heritage of antiquity. It may be that in what I have said, too much stress has been laid on the important places that we have to thank for rescuing this or that particular text. For this reason I would like at least in conclusion to emphasize the fact that many smaller places, which I have not mentioned, competed with the great and famous ones in this work of preservation. The maintenance of the tradition and the cultivation of the literature of Roman antiquity, whether through interest in its form or in its content, would never have been possible if only a dozen or so of the more important monasteries had devoted their attention to it. On the contrary, success was made possible because everywhere in the West an

THE BENEDICTINE ORDER

throughout the whole period of the middle ages, ancient Rome was — not perhaps always very extensively, but at least constantly studied in the works of Virgil and Statius and others. Thus classical Roman literature was at no time and in no place entirely forgotten, however incomplete the material or the interpretation of it may have been. The Renaissance, ungrateful though it was to the middle ages, was able to pick up very many medieval threads, and in fact did so. Its debt — and ours — to the monks who copied and preserved, transcribed and disseminated, was great.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

ΣΥΝ 'ΧΡΙΣΤΩΙ. *L'Union avec le Christ suivant Saint Paul: Première Partie 'Avec le Christ' dans la Vie Future* by Dom Jacques Dupont. Pp. 221 (Editions de l'Abbaye de Saint-André. Desclée) n.p.

'CHRISTIAN immortality has as its own characteristic to be the expansion of a friendship. The formula $\sigma\upsilon\nu\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\tilde{\omega}\ \epsilon\lambda\nu\alpha\iota$ which for St Paul designates the happiness of heaven, does not express an accidental note but the very essence of this happiness . . . The heart which loves wishes for no other joy than to live always near the Beloved.' In the work of discriminating scholarship which opens with this quotation from Père Festugière's *L'idéal religieux des Grecs et L'Évangile*, Dom Dupont analyses the Jewish, primitive Christian and Hellenist trends which enter the perspective and form the categories of St Paul's expression of union with Christ in the future life. A second volume will deal with that union in the present life.

Much study has of course already been given to the Pauline meaning of 'with Christ' and 'in Christ'. Deissmann, followed by C. H. Dodd, considered that 'with Christ' is the Pauline formula for the Christian's future, and 'in Christ' for his present state; this view was taken as basic by Lohmeyer and adopted in some degree by Père Allo.¹ Others, among them Père Prat, and in recent times particularly R. Schnackenburg, reverse this perspective by starting from the rich Pauline vocabulary compounded of words with $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ expressing union with Christ realized more in the present than eschatologically. But Dom Dupont observes that not even this presentation exactly fits the facts. It is not until Romans, and the Epistle of the Captivity that the idea of our mystical association with the great events of salvation preponderates. At the stage of I Thessalonians the union with Christ is mentioned only in reference to the end of time, and this eschatological sense of the expression prevails in primitive Christianity. This is the sense which Dom Dupont proceeds to examine in the present volume.

His enquiry, undertaken with wide knowledge of Rabbinic and Hellenistic literature, leads him to discover two quite distinct stages in St Paul's thought, marking the progress of his theology between I Thes

¹ The result of too much following of Deissmann by Catholics, observes Dom Dupont in an illuminating note (p. 8), has been to come to speak of a 'mystical Christ' in a way which corresponds very badly to the realism of St Paul's Christology. 'With St Paul, the intimacy of the union of the faithful with Christ never results in extending the personality of Christ beyond the individual Jesus.' We hope Dom Dupont will develop the point in his next volume. Friendship and union with the Person of Our Lord should not be diluted into a 'misty mysticism'.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

nd II Cor. The expression 'with the Lord', is used in I Thess iv, 13-17 as referring to the resurrection at the Parousia in a context tributary to apocalyptic themes and to a vocabulary already fixed in Jewish and primitive Christian eschatology. (It is not borrowed from the 'Parousia' meaning the visit of a Hellenistic monarch.) To be 'with God' at the Parousia did not mean to enjoy his friendship, but to form one of his court or escort, and for the Christian this was to enjoy with Christ the privileges of the eschatological kingdom which he had won and entered by his resurrection: heavenly life, royalty, glory. What Judaism had said of the coming of the Lord and of his saints with him, was applied by Christian hope to Christ in whose person that hope is realized. So St Paul is telling the Thessalonians that when Christ comes at the end of time, the dead will share in his reign as the living will. The theme is similar to that in Matt. xxv, 31 'when the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the angels with him' (cf. Deut. xxxiii, 2 for OT background). The best commentary upon it is the picture in Apoc. xiv, 1 of the Lamb standing on Mount Sion and 'with him' the Hundred and Forty Four Thousand.

But when as an aged prisoner St Paul writes to his Philippians: 'I am caught between two desires: I have a longing to depart and to be with Christ; for that is much the better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sakes' (Phil. i, 23-5) his point of view is quite different. He is not envisaging the final, collective Parousia, but desiring an immediately anticipated death as the means of personal union with Christ.

Now this point of view: 'We prefer to go forth from the body and dwell with the Lord' (πρὸς τὸν κύριον) occurs already in II Cor. v, 8. A most suggestive literary analysis of the context reveals the presence of three themes, with their corresponding expressions, deriving from the traditional Jewish Parousia, from current Greek philosophic thought with origins in the *Apology* and the *Phaedo*, and from the primitive Christian catechesis. The Greek theme is shown by the 'cynic diatribe' of iv, 8, 9, the mention of the 'vessel of clay' (which is not opposed as in Greek dualism to the soul but to the 'treasure' set in it by God), the typical contrast of 'death and Life' and of the 'exterior and interior man' (though St Paul's 'interior man' is again not the soul but the 'new creature in Christ'), by the exceptional purity and delicacy of the Greek of iv, 17a, and by the antitheses between 'momentary tribulation' and 'eternal glory'. With v, 1-5 we are back at the Jewish Apocalyptic theme,² but the mention of the soul 'weighed down' by the 'tent' and of 'nakedness' comes from Hellenistic philosophy, while the 'eternal house not made with hands' (cf. Mark xiv, 58) and the earthly and heavenly mansion probably derive from the primitive Christian catechesis.

² Dom Dupont considers that in 1-4 St Paul puts himself in the hypothesis of an imminent Parousia, and desires to live till the moment of the Lord's coming, when the mortal body will be 'clothed on top' with an immortal one and so dispensed from the 'nakedness' of a soul despoiled of its body; this offers a solution of one of the most disputed passages of the NT, which is confirmed by I Cor. xv, 53-4.

But now St Paul's view turns from the perspectives of the Lord's coming at the end of time, and he considers death, not as the terrible 'nakedness' which he hopes to avoid by being present at the Parousia, but as a going forth from that body in which we are separated from the Lord and have to walk by faith and not by vision, and he prefers rather to go forth from the body and be by the Lord. Analysis again shows the use of expression from Hellenistic philosophy which derive from Plato, and it would seem to be the influence of this climate of thought, with its unJewish distinction of soul from body, which has led St Paul to consider for a moment our lot outside the general Parousia. For although 'to go to the Lord' is a Jewish and Christian theme, it is not usual with St Paul, and the vehicle by which he expresses the thought is Hellenistic.

Going on now to Phil. i, 20-4 we find the burning desire of the Apostle to 'depart'³ and 'be with Christ, a thing far more the better', expressed in familiar Greek terms. It is his personal love for Christ which inspires this desire, but aided by the Hellenist conception of death as bringing a life of the soul separated from the body. At this point Greek thought — which spoke of 'joining the gods' — is itself surpassed by hope springing from love of the Divine Master and Friend. Before the final resurrection he will be with his Lord!

This able and fascinating study seems to have gone far to prove its points, but perhaps some qualifications suggest themselves. I Thess is especially concerned with the Parousia. Dom Dupont remarks with justice that at this stage of thought St Paul does not seem interested in the present condition of the Thessalonians' dead — the consolation he gives is to say that they will be the first to rise at the Parousia. All the same, he had a definite question before him, and Christian love and desire for union with Christ (so ardently expressed as regards this present life at least in Galatians, which we hold to be anterior to I Thess) must surely have found a more immediate answer among those better instructed in the faith than the new Thessalonian converts. What else is the meaning of the words of the dying Stephen which had surely sunk into Paul's own soul: 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit' (Acts vii, 59)? Again, are we to suppose that Christian love never penetrated through apocalyptic language to the Beloved? The Good Thief (since the reading 'when you come in your kingdom' is the better) thought in terms of the Parousia, and our Lord in replying 'to-day you will be with me in Paradise' used a current Jewish concept. But it seems rather like slavery to the literary form to comment: 'Jesus simply wishes to indicate that the thief will have a share in the happiness in which Jesus will equally rejoice; he does not mean that the happiness will consist in rejoicing in the presence and converse of Jesus' (p. 93).

In short, it is thrilling to see a Catholic classical scholar demonstrating how Greek thought became a vehicle to express revelation, and thus to

³ 'To be dissolved' is a bad translation by Vulg. and DV. The word means primarily 'to unloose, set free', and intransitively 'to loose moorings'.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

and Socrates linked with St Paul. That the inspiration behind this revelation was specifically Christian Dom Dupont likewise demonstrates. But we wonder if he has allowed quite enough penetration to the eyes of love. Anyhow this fine book has a lesson for the spiritual life of all, and not only a scholarly value. For perhaps we too often desire simply 'the happiness of heaven', and we should deepen our desire into one of union with our Lover.

DOM RALPH RUSSELL

Problèmes de l'Unité Chrétienne by Roger Aubert. Preface by Dom Lambert Beaudin. Appendix by C. J. Dumont, o.p. Pp. 123 (Editions de Chevetogne).

THIS book gives a résumé of the present trends towards co-operation and actual unity between the principal non-Catholic Christian bodies. The author stresses the virtues of each body; and in this respect the book is essentially a work of vulgarization, though a sadly needed one. Most Catholics are unaware of any sort of unity except that which they understand themselves to possess as Catholics. The unity is liable to remain strictly formal; and no understanding is present of the fact that in another sense unity has to be worked for. The unity of the Church is a supernatural counterpart of the unity of man. It therefore demands apostolic action. In relation to non-Catholic Christians this obviously demands special care. Dom Aubert stresses the need for knowledge, for love and for prayer. The problems are not ones which will solve themselves, nor will they be solved by a complacent expectation by Catholics.

'The Church would find a real enrichment in the return to unity of the different Christian communities' says Dom Aubert (p. 13). On the next page he quotes from Père Charles Boyer, S.J., writing in *Unitas* pointing to the failure of Catholics to use and nurture their own traditions. As the author shows, some of these traditions are now the treasured deals of the Orthodox, or the Protestant, or Anglican bodies.

The book ends with an Appendix on the 1952 Conference of the World Congress of Churches at Lund. Père Dupont, o.p., records the change which was visible at this Conference in the fact of the presence of four Catholic observers. This appendix like the book itself is essentially a actual record written with an understanding and solicitude that should enable the facts to become motive forces in the life of the Church. If it were translated into English it could serve a useful work of enlightenment, and be a means of stirring up further work and prayer amongst Catholics in the direction of Christian unity.

JOHN M. TODD.

Études Augustiniennes by H. Rondet, M. LeLandais, A. Lauras, Ch. Couturier. Pp. 334 (Aubier, Paris, 1953) 885 fr.

ON almost every page of this excellent book I have been haunted by Botticelli's restless study of St Augustine in the *Chiesa d'Ognisanti* in Florence, as well as by that well-known phrase: 'It is night because here

mankind wanders blindly', which Barthian theologians like to quote. Indeed, the preponderant majority of those who read St Augustine, whether they be sons of Kierkegaard, Hegel, Port Royal, Baius, or even Cajetan, find in him only a *Weltanschauung* of irreconcilable contrasts. After all, where does one find a greater exaggeration of opposites than in the works of this 'Doctor of Sin and Grace', intensely plagued as he was by the tragic element of mutability? But those who study him most devotedly and most carefully discover something more—a doctrine which insists that above, below and within all sharp contrasts, critical examinations and rational demonstrations, there is an integrating principle and that unless this principle is realized a false understanding of his teaching is acquired. One might say that the four men who have written these *Études* have read their master most devotedly and most carefully. Under the direction of the Jesuit faculty of Lyon-Fourvière they present three highly detailed treatises—really three books in one. Far more than the generalities so frequently voiced, their scrupulous precision will greatly assist the eager followers of St Augustine. In spite of the technical quality of the book, I think Newman would have appreciated it.

The first study may be considered as an introduction to the Saint's *Tractatus in Joannem*. In an effort to determine the precise date of their composition and the public to whom he addressed them, Fr LeLandaie has re-established two years of St Augustine's preaching. He has done this by attempting to bring to life the Church of Hippo in 416-418 and the ardent thought of its Bishop in his exhortations to those of his flock who were under the influence of Donatism and Pelagianism. The second study traces the development of the theme of the two cities. What did St Augustine really mean by the City of God? Hoping to gain more light on this perennial question of philosophers and theologians of history, the authors have wisely gone outside the *De Civitate Dei*, patiently investigated all of the Saint's writings and focused special attention on his doctrine of 'the Mystical Body of Christ as it treads towards its eternal abode' (154). Finally, we have a very detailed examination of the meaning of the words *sacramentum* and *mysterium* in the writings of St Augustine. Fr Couturier has carefully extracted all the uses of these terms (2,279!), classified them according to rite, symbol or mystery and tried to point out their underlying conformity. And that other student may pursue along these same lines, two extensive indexes complete the book; one classifies the texts according to their meaning, the other is a table of references to the complete works.

We are told by Fr LeLandaie that as Bishop of Hippo 'Augustine had one principal aim: to unite further to Christ the souls who were entrusted to him' (91). But did he, especially in his opposition to Celestius, commit his opponent's sin of dogmatizing certain true and Christian principles while neglecting other principles equally true and Christian? Fr LeLandaie throws some much needed light on many of the Saint's rash statements.

about predestination, election and justification which, at first sight, seem to acknowledge only a way from God to man. He discovers a doctrine of freedom, love and perseverance running through the entire series of tracts (*petits sermons*) which compose the *In Joannem*; a doctrine which, we are given to hope, allows for a way from man to God. In other words, while St Augustine was waving the *Epistolae ad Romanos* at his adversaries with his right hand, the left was holding close to his heart the Fourth Gospel. Fr LeLandaïs believes that each hand knew what the other was doing. *Augustin aime Jean*, we are told. Yet the doctrine of love which our author believes Augustine found in John seems to be limited to a self-effacing love proceeding from a knowledge that 'all that is good in us issues from the depths of the grace of God' (88). How, then, is friendship or reciprocal love with God possible? In examining the Saint's commentary on those important verses, the fifteenth and sixteenth of John xv, I find that he does at first close the door on our being able to do anything about it. But in Tract lxxvi, 3 there is a passage which I wish our author had not overlooked: *Maneat ergo dilectio; ipse est enim fructus noster. Quae dilectio nunc est in desiderio . . . et ipso desiderio quodcumque petierimus in nomine unigeniti Filii . . . etc.* (See also Tract lxxxiii, 3: *Qui autem se propter habendum Deum diligunt, ipsi se diligunt . . .*) Does not Augustine wisely imply that there can be no movement toward God or friendship with God unless *agape* is accompanied by *eros*?

Similar general questions arise in the study of the two cities. St Augustine is just as sure of himself about the celestial city as he is about God's prejudgement — '*Catholica* is here below the incarnation of the City of God' (155). But if he is vague about free-will, he is even more vague about the terrestrial city. Is the State to be utterly absorbed into the Church, the natural into the supernatural, with an unwholesome theocracy as the result? To guard against interpreting him in this way, the authors point out how he denounced that political pessimism which, while pursuing the good, abandons the earth to the powers of evil, disinterests itself in the happenings of the terrestrial city because God founded the Church as the society of the predestined, and so on. We know how Luther failed to take this warning, but we must, I think, sympathize with him, for it is not easy to read into Augustine a constructive Christian humanism. Nevertheless, Fr Louras and Fr Rondet claim that they can, interpreting the Saint to mean that 'the State, charged to procure upon earth the common good, does not have the promises of eternity which the Church enjoys, but it is no less an auxiliary to the divine work' (59). They do not tell us, however, that Orosius, Gregory the Great, Charlemagne, Gregory VII, and even St Thomas and Bossuet also considered the *De Civitate Dei* their chief source book for their respective theories of history, which seems to indicate that more than just two views can be extracted from it. More in need of qualification, it seems to me, is the statement that 'the Augustinians of the Middle Ages, thanks to

a stronger idea of the correspondence between nature and the supernatural, knew best how to distinguish the State from the Church, and their doctrine, *approuvée par le Magistère, est encore la nôtre*' (159). One question remains: if we are to look upon Augustine as 'the man who first discovered the meaning of time' and also apply the theory that contraries are not contradictories, which our authors maintain that he held, must we not in order to sustain a truly Catholic perception of time, complement his lineal approach to history with one which is spiral?

It is not until we examine the doctrines against which St Augustine preached, that we see that they were heretical because they absolutized only one aspect of truth. Is it not this peremptory segmentation of the spirit that he condemns in each case? Did not Augustine recognize that the Church, as an embodiment of God's City, must necessarily sanction a great no-man's land of theology and that as a Bishop-theologian it was his duty to protect that land from being contracted? These are points for consideration which our authors directly and indirectly raise, as well as the all-important one which suggests that where we recognize an inconsistency between our powerlessness to accomplish the good and our own liberty of will to follow it, Augustine apparently finds no confusion at all simply because he adopts a different standpoint from ours — one with 'a more truly *Catholic* view'.

But if we approach Augustine in order to extract a particular theology of history, a mysticism of sin, or a systematized doctrine of grace, of love, of freedom; if we stress the *contra-versus* elements in his disputes with the Donatists, Pelagians, Arians, Manichaeans, etc., are we not like many before us, certain to shipwreck on Scylla? What, then, is the Augustinian secret? Perhaps a better glimpse of it is given in the third study where 'desiring to approach the works of Augustine in a new spirit, free from all prejudice of traditional interpretation' (168) the author discovers that the Saint was more conscious of the mysterious element in the sacrifice, rite, symbol, etc., than a casual reading of his works would lead one to believe. Moreover, 'it is principally on the mystery of Christ that he concentrated his attention. Because of Christ all becomes mystery in his eyes; it is by their relation to this essential mystery that "sacraments", "symbols" or "mysteries" require the title *sacramentum* or *mysterium*' (267).

All four authors are very much aware of this awe-inspiring factor in Augustine's writings. One only wishes they had pronounced upon it more emphatically, for throughout the book one finds statements such as: 'Augustine knew that he approached a *problème redoutable*' (86); 'This mystery entirely remains and troubles us' (88); 'The Bishop of Hippo knows that he has here a profound mystery' (94); 'The theme of the two cities . . . remains still to-day quite indefinite' (152); 'He has preferred to leave in its ambiguity this term . . .' (158); 'Now and then the diverse points of view are strangely reunited' (188); 'All these

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

expressions ultimately indicate the one and unique mystery of God which Christ'—with this quotation in the footnotes: *Ad cognoscendum mysterium Dei, quod est Christus, in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae absconditi . . .* (259) — and many more. Greater emphasis might also have been placed on what is hidden away in another footnote in the second study (154) — Augustine's use of *Semel locutus est Deus, quo audiui* (Ps. 61-12). It is human always to hear double, but as humans we have a choice between the sleepless *Angst* of a theology of 'either-or' and the wakeful rest of a theology of 'both-and'. In fact one might best summarize these studies by saying that the authors give us good reason to believe that St Augustine did not choose the former.

When Goethe said: *Zum Erstaunen bin ich da!* was he not more 'Augustinian' than many who give themselves this label? And if *to marvel* at man's *raison d'être*, it implies surely that one is not only struck dumb by the wonder of it all, but also that one is for ever beating upon this dark, silent thing that surrounds us and, as Augustine says, 'always realizing that one does not know, that one understands oneself in not knowing'. Now that an increasing number of theologians are happily directing their attention more towards the pulsations of grace rather than man's ratiocinations, these *Études* will greatly assist their work, and primarily because of the principle around which they are woven — that the greatest solicitude which gives birth to theological inquiry ultimately presents us, not with neat, rational solutions, but with problems which reason rightly proposes without being able to answer and hence opens its windows. Indeed, the Canons must always be kept open!

C. F. KELLEY

Origen: Contra Celsum translated with an introduction and notes by I. Chadwick. Pp. xl + 531 (Cambridge University Press) 60s.

It appears that this is only the second English translation of a work which Mr Chadwick describes as 'the culmination of the whole apologetic movement of the second and third centuries'. The first is that in the *Antiochene Christian Library*, based on the text of the Benedictine Delarue (1733). Mr Chadwick takes Koetschau's text (in the Berlin corpus, 1899) as his basis, and notes every occasion on which he deserts it, though he points out that Koetschau's preference for the Vatican codex A (thirteenth century) as compared with the older manuscripts of the *Philocalia* extracts has been questioned by both Wendland and Winter. We still await the publication of a recently discussed papyrus text of parts of the first two books of the *c. Celsum*; it is known that this text is in the same line of tradition as A.

Mr Chadwick's translation seems to read easily. His notes are short but it goes without saying that they are scholarly and valuable. In the introduction, besides a section on the manuscripts, editions and translations, there are discussions of the philosophical background of

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

the work, its date, and the identity and date of Celsus, his theology, and modern attempts to reconstruct his *True Word* from Origen's abundant quotations. Origen, though not without hesitation, identifies his Celsus with an Epicurean of the same name, and Lucian had an Epicurean friend of this name. But the philosophical position of Origen's Celsus is, says Mr Chadwick, that of Middle Platonism, and he 'at no point shows any signs of holding any Epicurean opinions whatever'. Origen himself recognizes the 'Platonizing' element in Celsus, and in the latter part of this work ceases to refer to his 'Epicureanism'. It is inconceivable, says Mr Chadwick, that the *True Word* was written by an Epicurean. He wrote the work probably about A.D. 177-180, possibly at Alexandria. Origen's reply was written about A.D. 248 and, 'in spite of his apparent opposition to philosophy . . . his whole position is informed by a philosophical approach, the influence of which on his mind he himself was perhaps inclined to underestimate'. It is to be noted that cultured pagans like Celsus sought to 'harmonize a continued acceptance of the old polytheism with a kind of monotheism', the many gods being as it were God's satraps or provincial governors. Celsus has little sympathy for the intransigent monotheism of Jews and Christians and indeed argues that the Christian worship of Christ is inconsistent with it — Origen of course replies that Christ said 'I and my Father are one' (viii, 12). The Jewish-Christian beliefs are a distortion of the True Doctrine (Celsus's title) which can be collected from the traditions of 'the most ancient and pious races and the wisest men' (Chadwick, p. xxi). The argument is curiously like the Protestant critique of Catholicism for its intransigent insistence upon corrupt developments of the Gospel tradition. In the 'short run' this intransigence led to the persecution of the Christians, but in the 'long run' it brought them victory, since if Christianity could not be destroyed and could not be assimilated the totalitarian Empire had no other solution except to adopt Christianity and suppress paganism.

It is a sad illustration of the decay of humane studies in England that this expensive work of scholarship does not incorporate a critical edition of the Greek text of the *contra Celsum*. It may be objected that this would have made the work too costly. But in France they manage to produce such editions, accompanied with translations and notes, at a relatively reasonable price.

DOM CHRISTOPHER BUTLER

The Explanatio Symboli Ad Initiandos: A Work of Saint Ambrose. Edited by the late Dom R. H. Connolly, Monk of Downside. *Texts and Studies*, Vol. X. Pp. 39 (Cambridge University Press, 1952) 10s.

DOM R. HUGH CONNOLLY died in March 1948, after only a few days' illness, at a time when this book was almost ready for publication. An old friend of his, Canon J. H. Srawley, who shares Dom Connolly's opinion on the authorship of the *Explanatio*, offered to bring out his friend's work and revised the text for this purpose.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Dom Connolly's exceptional competence in Ambrosian studies is well known, for he it was who restored to the Saint the authorship of the treatise *De Sacramentis*.¹

A few years later, Dom Connolly defended the Ambrosian authorship of the *Explanatio Symboli* against Dr F. R. Montgomery Hichcock's ascription of this work to St Maximus of Turin,² especially by examining more closely the arguments of Caspari and Dom Morin.³ As this article, in our view, has lost none of its value, it is surprising that it is nowhere cited in the present work, from various parts of which an otherwise complete bibliography on the subject could be established.

This slim volume, the tenth and last of the first series of *Texts and Studies* to which Dom Connolly has already contributed two volumes, contains the first modern critical edition, modestly described as a 'provisionally constructed text' of the *Explanatio Symboli ad Initiandos*. It is introduced by an expert assessment of the value of the three extant manuscripts and followed by an English translation. This, like the Latin text, is enriched with extensive and valuable footnotes.

The work is concluded by a demonstration of the Ambrosian authorship of the *Explanatio*, originally an Appendix to Dom Connolly's still unpublished study of the *De Sacramentis*. He employs his usual method; he excels in assembling different passages on the same idea from all over Ambrose's authentic works. Hence it can be deduced that the familiar and unstudied character of the treatise is due to its being a sermon that was noted down during delivery, and not a text destined for publication and revised carefully as such by the author.

Students can very safely make use of Dom Connolly's posthumous work, at least until the publication of the new edition of St Ambrose's works which is being prepared by Otto Faller, S.J. LOUIS BROU, O.S.B.

The Sources of the Synoptic Gospels. Vol. I, St Mark, by the late W. L. Knox, edited by H. Chadwick. Pp. xiv+162 (Cambridge University Press)

FOLLOWING upon Professor Lightfoot's and Dr Farrer's recent studies of St Mark, and the still more recent commentary by Dr Vincent Taylor, comes this posthumous work of Dr Wilfred Knox, edited by Mr Chadwick, who hopes that the uncompleted second volume, on St Luke and St Matthew, may yet be published. Dr Farrer, Dr Taylor and Dr Knox were each writing without knowledge of the contents of the two works published so nearly at the same time as his own, and this makes even a hasty comparison all the more interesting.

¹ *The De Sacramentis. A Work of St Ambrose; Two papers by the Rev. Dom R. Connolly*. Downside Abbey, 1942. 31 pp.

² *The Explanatio Symboli Ad Initiandos compared with Rufinus and Maximus of Turin*, in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 47 (1946) p. 58-69.

³ *St Ambrose and the Explanatio Symboli*, in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 47 (1946) p. 185-196.

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

Dr Knox presents his book, as, in some sense, a challenge to the more extreme form-critics, the school of critics whose basic assumption is 'that during the oral period the tradition' of which our Synoptic Gospels are a precipitate 'consisted in the main of isolated units which could be traced from their origin in preaching and teaching to the point where they were committed to writing in the Gospels' (Dr Taylor). Dr Knox on the other hand attempts 'to deal with the Synoptic Gospels not as collections of anecdotes but as compilations of sources underlying Mark and the hypothetical Q, and also the matter peculiar to Luke and Matthew'. These two positions seem so contradictory that a third position contradicting them both might appear impossible. However, they share one feature in common: neither of them takes much account of St Mark as a creative literary artist with either theme or pattern in his composition. Dr Farrer, however, thinks that St Mark in his gospel is something much more than a compiler, whether of oral traditions or of previously written documents: 'the Gospel is a genuine, and profoundly consistent, complete act of Thought'. He of course allows that St Mark used 'sources', but he claims that the first thing to do is, not to study the forms in which his material reached St Mark, but the 'pattern' of St Mark's Gospel itself. 'No one can usefully set about paragraph-criticism until he has got the plan and purpose of the whole book into his head'. Admitting that St Mark uses the 'anecdotal form', he suggests that each anecdote may have been formulated for the place it was to occupy in the book as a whole. This is in striking contrast with the whole idea formed by Dr Knox of St Mark's clumsy editing. Thus he suggests that possibly the story of the demoniac boy was inserted in its present context 'because it had to go in somewhere'; Mark v, 8 'is very clumsily interpolated after 7'; 'but pure inadvertence' Mark 'puts in at ix, 36' the less appropriate of two variants of a single incident; and so too in *St Luke* the trial before Herod 'can, like almost every other incident in the Gospel, be omitted without interrupting the narrative'.

Thus the critics who have all agreed that *St Mark* is the earliest Gospel, a source used by St Matthew and St Luke, are very far from reaching any agreement upon the next stage in criticism. But all are of one mind in rejecting with horror any suggestion that the 'priority of Mark' is their common root error.

Dr Knox gives a list of nine sources 'which seem to have existed as independent units before this compilation by Mark into the form of our Gospel' (but he admits that one of these nine, the 'Marcan apocalypse' may be an original compilation by Mark). He 'conjectures' two or three other sources as well. In other words, ten or a dozen 'sources' are disclosed almost entirely by internal criticism upon a Gospel whose 'general uniformity of style' is not denied by Dr Knox himself. It is piquant to reflect that he is thus using upon *St Mark* the 'critical methods' exhibited by his brother Ronald in *Essays in Satire*, with results almost as startling.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

ought to be stated emphatically that the chances that his results are correct are *a priori* almost infinitesimal. The game of source finding *in cuo* has been played over and over again, and is almost invariably a *disco*.

It might have been expected that among the 'sources' considered by Dr Knox would be found 'the hypothetical Q'. Whatever Q stands for and for me it means *St Matthew*), I should regard it as obvious that *St Mark* has made use of it. Dr Rawlinson, in his commentary (to which Dr Knox frequently refers), argues at several points that *St Mark* is dependent on the version of Q extant at Rome. But Dr Knox appears not even to consider this view; possibly it will be dealt with in the second volume. Among the sources which he claims to have disentangled there are some unitary sections of *St Mark* (e.g. i, 40-iii, 6 and iv, 1-34). But one (the twelve-source) is scattered about in seven or eight different Targum contexts. The twelve-source is held to have been used by *St Mark* in the Passion-narrative, but interwoven with a second version of the Passion-story. Here things are complicated by the fact that *St Luke*, who certainly used *St Mark* as one of his sources, is supposed by Dr Knox to have had also available *both* the sources used by *St Mark*, and to have woven his own Passion narrative out of them and *St Mark*. As an example (rather an extreme one I admit) of the results obtained, it may be observed that one section of the twelve-source is said to be presented by: *Mark* xiv, 1 f., a (lost) sentence of preparation for the Last Supper, *Mark* xiv, 17-21, *Luke* xxii, 15-18 . . . *Luke* xxii, 27-30, *Mark* xiv, 27-31; while the parallel source (called by Dr Knox 'Disciples' source') is found at: *Mark* xiv, 12-16, *Mark* xiv, 22-25, *Luke* xxii, 21-23, *Luke* xxii, 33 f.; and *Luke* xxii, 35-38 is 'probably from an unattached addition'. Is it unfair to say that if anything of this sort corresponded to what actually happened, it would be quite impossible thus to disentangle the sources by purely internal criticism and to feel any sort of security about the results obtained? It so happens that Dr Taylor holds a comparable theory about *St Mark's* passion-narrative: he thinks that a Roman passion story has by *St Mark* been expanded by the aid of Petrine addition. And, as was to be expected, his Roman passion story works out to be something quite different from either of Dr Knox's sources (Taylor, Commentary, pp. 660-62. Dr Taylor admits that even the Roman passion story may be composite, but I do not see that his detailed suggestions in this connexion serve to affect any close approximation to Dr Knox); nor do I think it had occurred to Dr Taylor to compose a source by combining bits of *St Luke's* peculiar matter with bits of *St Mark*. It is time that criticism began to study the information about *St Mark's* method of dealing with his material that can be derived from a comparison with *St Matthew* on the hypothesis that *St Matthew* stands as a source to *St Mark*. To take a single instance: according to Dr Knox, *Mark* xiii, 31 is a piece of 'alien matter', inserted between verses 8 and 12, and

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

even so it has secondary features; it ought not to mention 'governors and Kings'. The original saying has been preserved in Matthew x, 17, but expanded by the Marcan governors and kings and the allusion to the Gentiles. Matthew x, 19 'is conflating Mark with another source' and has 'preserved a primitive feature' in 'there shall be given you'. The 'spirit of your father' in the next verse [of Matthew] seems to be midway between the original Lucan version ['a mouth and wisdom'] and the developed theology of Mark ['the Holy Spirit']. When St Matthew arrives at Mark xiii, 9-11 in its own context (at Matthew xxiv, 9) 'he omits all the Marcan section except the last clause . . . because he has already used it' in Matthew x. 'He substitutes a series of warnings which reflect the effect of the Jewish rebellion on wavering elements of the Church in Palestine' (p. 106). This is one of the sections I dealt with in my *The Originality of St Matthew* (pp. 79-81, 116 f.). Mark xiii, 10 is crucial to the whole question of source utilization here, and the only tenable view is that Matthew x, 17-22 is the source of Mark xiii, 9, 11, while Matthew xxiv, 9 is an ordinary Matthæan doublet. Dr Knox does not discuss the problems raised by Mark xiii, 10, and it will be noticed that he supposes Luke, in a Marcan context, to give the 'original version' of a saying, corrupted to some extent in *St Matthew*, but further corrupted in *St Mark*. This seems to offend against all canons of Synoptic criticism.

Dr Knox's book fails, in my view, in its main purpose. But it should be unnecessary to say that it is the work of a profound scholar and an acute analytical mind. The erudition displayed in its footnotes is enormous. It seems a great pity that the 'Lachmann fallacy' has led to such a waste of talent and learning as I must feel this book to represent.

The Council of Chalcedon, a historical and doctrinal survey, by R. V. Sellers. Pp. xviii+361 (S.P.C.K.) 37s. 6d.

DR SELLERS has given us a valuable study, perhaps the fullest in English, of the definition of Chalcedon in its historical setting. He traces the history from the Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431), past the Formulary of Reunion (433) and the 'Second' Council of Ephesus (i.e. the 'Latrocinium' 449) to the great council of 451. In a second section of his work, he sketches in three chapters the earlier Christological thought of Alexandria, of Antioch and of the West. Finally, he gives a careful commentary of the Definition itself and of the so-called 'Tome' of St Leo, followed by a study of the controversy with the Monophysites before Justinian and a chapter on the 'Clarification of the Chalcedonian Faith' by the Chalcedonians in Justinian's reign.

The treatment of this great theme is facilitated by Dr Seller's distinction between 'the principle of Christological confession', that 'Jesus Christ is the Son of God living a human life', and 'the principle of Christological enquiry', whereby the mystery of Christ is scrutinised by the faith.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

lightened understanding. The former principle is kerygmatic, the latter theological. The former relates to the one Person of the Redeemer, the latter to his two natures. Alexandria emphasized the former, Antioch explored the implications of the latter principle. The West, starting as did both Alexandrians and 'Orientals' or Antiochenes, from the standpoint of soteriology, held a natural balance between confession and enquiry through its notion of Christ as the mediator between God and Man. All this is lucidly worked out by Dr Sellers, who is perhaps even more than generous in maintaining that the respective emphases of Alexandria and Antioch were rarely pushed so far as to exclude the complementary truth held by the opposing schools.

The author sees the actual Definition as a point of confluence of the three traditions. He argues that whereas the first part (down to 'of Mary the Virgin Mother of God as to his manhood') is ultimately dependent on the Antiochene Formulary of Reunion, the following part shows the influence of Cyril's Second Letter to Nestorius (*Obloquuntur*), and the phrase 'in the two natures' was Western (though not exclusively so), and was 'in effect forced on the Council . . . through the influence of papal states'. We may compare the opinion of P. Ortiz in *Das Konzil von Chalcedon*, i, p. 400: 'A happy combination of the Christological formulas of the Eastern and Western Fathers' — P. Ortiz obviously includes Cyril among the Easterns.

It is well known that the extreme 'Cyrilline' school refused to accept the Definition, and the following century saw a long-drawn-out struggle between 'monophysites', who included the greatest theologians of the age, and 'Chalcedonians' (often styled 'Nestorians' by their opponents). The claim is made by Dr Sellers that the former, though rejecting the Definition of a Council whose ecumenicity is conceded by Eastern Orthodox, Catholics and Anglicans alike, were actually as a rule orthodox in their Christology; the task of the Chalcedonians being to show that the Definition was not unorthodox. It is possible that readers to whom the subject is unfamiliar will not gather clearly enough from Dr Sellers' pages the extent to which misunderstanding was due to equivocal terminology. They should pay particular attention to note 7, p. 138, in which it is pointed out that *usia*, *hypostasis* and *physis* were all capable of meaning (a) a subsistent individual, (b) 'a common undifferentiated substance' or nature; while *prosopon* could mean the outward expression of an individual or the individual himself (seen, as it were, from the outside). These were the terms that were bandied about from side to side — and, incidentally, which had to be translated into Latin or themselves to serve as translations of such Latin terms as *substantia*, *persona*, and *natura*. Thus when Cyrillines (unconsciously following Apollinaris) spoke of 'the one nature (of the Word) incarnate', they, doubtless, as a rule, meant by 'nature' a subsistent individual. But to Oriental and Western ears the phrase might suggest a denial of the full reality of Christ's humanity, which is 'Eutychianism'. On

the other hand, the Definition's insistence upon the permanence of the 'two natures' could be represented by monophysites as sheer nestorianism.

In discussing the controversies that followed after the Definition Dr Sellers is perhaps even too irenic. Out of zeal to prove the orthodoxy of the Definition the Chalcedonians tended to become exaggeratedly hostile to the old Antiochenes and this tendency was of course welcome at the court of Justinian and his devout Queen. The danger was 'an exaggerated fear of "Nestorianism" and an excessive partiality for verbal monophysism'. Justinian sought to impose on Christian *faith* a Christological system which made Cyril the only serious theologian in this sphere . . . Justinian and Theodora made dominant a kind of integrist mentality in matters where serene research ought to be the theologian's "birthright" (C. Moeller in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, i, pp. 644-7. This massive collection of studies appeared too late to be utilized by Dr Sellers). This Cyrillian exclusiveness was of course characteristic of the monophysites. It also expressed itself in the first ten anathematisms of the fifth ecumenical council (Constantinople, 553), but these anathematisms were not endorsed by Pope Vigilius.

A more delicate question arises from this council's condemnation of the three Chapters. Here, says Dr Sellers, the council 'erred', since the Antiochene propositions there stigmatized were orthodox *in their original contexts* (pp. 328 ff.). On this point Moeller (op. cit. p. 689, n. 14) comments: 'Vigilius's approbation of the decrees against the three Chapters means that the incriminated texts *prout sonant*, are heretical, and the obviously are'. In other words the propositions are condemned not in the contexts but as considered apart from their contexts. 'To interpret the ecumenicity of the fifth Council we must study the use made of it by the ordinary magisterium of the Pope. And it is at once apparent that the Popes only required the admission that it had never done anything contrary to *the faith* at Chalcedon' (ibid., p. 689). If Moeller's conclusions on the authority of this Council are correct, the Church is not finally committed to the extreme positions, the total and exclusive Alexandrianism, of the neo-Chalcedonians, who may be distinguished from the more sober Chalcedonian theologians by their attempt to claim as much authority for the Cyril of the Anathematisms as for the Cyril of the Formulary Reunion. Incidentally, Moeller has much less respect for Leontius of Byzantium than Dr Sellers shows.

Author and publisher are alike to be congratulated on the production of this useful work. It will need to be studied alongside *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, which in some respects is more fully abreast of the latest scholarship. And if a second edition is called for, there are a good many small misprints or slips to correct. In particular, it appears that *not* on p. 349, line 5, should be *but*; and at p. 159, n. 2, line 4, I suggest that *should* be substituted for *and*.

DOM CHRISTOPHER BUTLER

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

La Victoire du Nouvel Adam by Henri Tardif. Pp. 220 (Les Éditions ouvrières, Paris) n.p.

In his foreword, Père Tardif states that his purpose is to bring out and illustrate some central themes which are present throughout the course of God's redemptive work as we see it unfolding in history. Our vantage point is the victory over sin won by Christ, on which the whole of history converges and in which it finds its meaning and fulfilment.

But to grasp the significance of our redemption it is essential for us to place the New Testament in its right relation to the Old and to see Christ as rooted and grounded in that long and laborious redemptive process of which he is both its cause and fruition.

Obviously this book makes no claim to be opening up new ground; it aims at helping us along over country that in recent years has become increasingly familiar but is still bewildering to the newcomer. Père Tardif does this by giving a proper understanding of typology and biblical symbolism, as exemplified, for instance, in the teaching on the Kingdom of God, the Day of Yahweh and the Day of Judgement as it is presented in the Old and New Testaments.

The book is divided into short sections, and the argument is presented simply and intelligibly, and is supported by a host of scriptural references. The interpretation of biblical typology is never forced or fanciful.

These sections illustrate the central theme of Christ's victory over sin by considering particular aspects of it, such as Christ's victory over disease, his power over the elements, over death, and his power to resolve both the conflict within each man and among the human race itself. There is an interesting section showing that the physical differences between man and woman transformed by original sin into the cause of disunity between them, and the inequality between the sexes, disappears by our baptism in Christ — as indeed the Roman Missal declares in the rite for the Blessing of the Font. The sections on the significance of the blood poured out in the sacrifices of the Old Testament, and those on the New Creation foreshadowed by the Flood, Exodus and the Return from Exile, are admirably treated.

A book such as this will prove to the reader that it is to the Bible itself we should go; there can be no substitute. This the author fully recognizes and he quotes St Jerome as saying 'ignorer l'Écriture, c'est ignorer le Christ'.

The last fifty pages give extracts from the Fathers illustrating their teaching upon the chief themes with which this book deals; in particular, how they understood the statement in Genesis that man is made in the image of God.

DOM DOMINIC GAISFORD

The Letters of St Bernard of Clairvaux. Newly translated by Bruno Scott James. Pp. xx + 530 (Burns Oates) 42s.

THE eighth centenary of St Bernard's death receives a worthy and fitting tribute in the production of this imposing volume devoted to his letters.

The translator's introduction makes an admirable preparation for the feast that is to follow. Here the reader is provided with just sufficient historical information for enabling him to appreciate the period, circumstances and relevancy of these remarkable documents which in their vast bulk, rich variety and eloquence easily place their author among the foremost masters in any age of the epistolatory art. The principles and canons conformed with in this translation are lucidly expressed, and in their reasonableness seem almost at the outset to disarm any subsequent criticism. But experience brings home that a ready acceptance of such an apologia *can* be followed by disappointment with its resultant application. Not here, however. The English is clear, vivid and dignified, with none of that dustiness that worries and tires the reader of those otherwise praiseworthy translations of the Fathers by the Oxford professors of nearly a century ago.

St Bernard himself is always so very much alive, that it is urgent that his ideas should be conveyed in language of current idiom, yet as here without any vulgar colloquialisms or obtrusion of the knowing or overtopical.

In quite a number of instances the original Latin is quoted for the sake of justifying the rendering offered.

The letters are carefully arranged according to the place described, and headings or footnotes of very moderate dimensions are added for the sake of necessary information. But the torrential flow of quotations that poured from St Bernard's pen, summoned at call it would seem from an encyclopædic memory, is left for the reader to verify for himself. Here is a suggestion possibly of value for a scripture class. The references, had they been given, besides adding to the size of the book and entailing a deal of extra labour, would no doubt have introduced an element of fidgetiness in the reading, though they *do* arouse a certain amount of unsatisfied curiosity.

The phenomenon of genius is of course always inscrutable. But quite beyond this, the mere physical achievement of such giants as St Bernard seems scarcely capable of any human explanation. How and when could he have found time or strength for the penning of so many letters, even if they had been dry commonplaces devoid of art, and he himself never otherwise employed than in their production?

This fine translation of sensitive, personal outpourings makes St Bernard alive to readers even of this far off and very different century, for therein his character is glowingly revealed.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

The Revelations of Mechthilde of Magdeburg (1210–1297) 'The Flowing Light of the Godhead'. Translated from the Manuscript in the Library of the monastery of Einsiedeln by Lucy Menzies. Pp. xxxvii + 263 (Longmans) 18s.

MECHTHILDE OF MAGDEBURG, whose revelations are here for the first time translated into English, must be clearly distinguished from St Mechthilde Hackeborn of Helfde who though her junior by thirty years has long been known and esteemed as among the foremost of our mystical writers.

The Cistercian convent of Helfde in Saxony housed within its walls for a short period during the thirteenth century four of the most remarkable nuns recorded in history.

The fact that two of them were named Gertrude and two of them Mechthilde is confusing and calls for a little disentangling.

Gertrude Hackeborn, a nun of great sanctity and of such capability that she became Abbess at the age of nineteen, provided for her nuns an atmosphere of study, theology and prayer that encouraged in them the flowering of the most exalted graces. She left us no writings. But she entrusted to her younger sister, St Mechthilde, the care and education of a small child who entered the Convent school at the age of five, went through the whole course of grammar, philosophy and even theology with brilliant distinction, was professed as a nun and became universally celebrated as St Gertrude the Great, a saint to whose writings Abbot Chapman used to attribute his knowledge of theology.

To this extraordinary haven of intellectual study and sanctity came another much older nun who had lived for many years first as a Beguin, then a Dominican tertiary. Her mystical writings were already known and valued at Helfde, and when owing to her lofty ideals, outspoken denunciation of abuses, and now in addition the infirmities of old age and failing sight, things in her own convent were getting too difficult to cope with, she sought and found entrance into this stricter and more peaceful cloister. Thus a third mystical writer and a second Mechthilde — Mechthilde of Magdeburg came to increase yet more the already great prestige and lustre of Helfde.

None of these four remarkable women were ever formally canonized. But the Church by her official action has recognized Mechthilde Hackeborn and her pupil Gertrude as saints, and each has an appointed place in her calendar.

Our primary concern here is with Mechthilde of Magdeburg and her stimulating spiritual writings.

The original text in Low German has not so far been found, but two early translations into Latin, one in the University of Basle, and another — the most authentic text and only complete copy — is in the Library of Einsiedeln. Here the translator of our present English copy has been working for three years, and her labours have enriched us with a beautifully produced and highly distinguished addition to our mystical literature.

We are provided with a competent introduction and adequate notes; but the editor has wisely kept out of the way as much as possible, and the reader can follow the various moderately sized sections without undue interruption. If he has any desire at all for spiritual truth he should not be disappointed. For the matter of these devout reflexions is most composite and varied, and stands out sharply from other writings of the kind. As to what Abbot Cuthbert Butler used to call 'panoramic visions' they are not mere bewildering descriptions of transcendental states, but contain allegory and symbol of great mysteries and doctrines often freely breaking into poetry and pregnant with light and counsel for daily conduct. The occasions of her reflexions are very seldom the words and ceremonies of the liturgy, as they are so prevailing with St Mechthilde and St Gertrude, investing their writings with such especial interest and value for those who follow the Rule of St Benedict. This authoress, however, spent only the last twelve years of her life at Helfde, and had already written six out of the seven parts which make up her book.

Her favourite saint was St Dominic, and from his order she had drawn her special spiritual formation. Nevertheless, if her theology was weak beside that of St Gertrude, and even some of her views unorthodox, such as that the souls in Purgatory were not certain of their salvation, she can quote, translate and apply the words of the liturgy on occasion, and constantly gives the impression of that superior insight into moral, psychological and doctrinal truths that marks such contemplatives, and gives so peculiar significance and vitality even to their tritest sayings. At the age of twelve she had been granted an unforgettable experience of grace, and this seems to have raised her to a state of spiritual elevation that brings conviction of reality. It would seem that her persecuting companions had managed to bring her into trouble with the Church, so that for a time she was deprived of communion, yet she must ever have intended entire submission to authority, for thus she writes:

'Ah noble, holy, *Christian Faith!*
Do thou ever enlighten the eyes of my soul!
That I may truly know
Where I have gone wrong
In Christian things.
I commend my work and my senses to thee.'

Again: 'I hold holy Church much much dearer than anything of my own. On the whole, though she has nothing soft to say of sin or Hell, Mechthilde is not far behind our own magnificent Dame Julian in the general hopefulness of her conclusions.

In view of the recent preoccupation of our theologians with the question of unbaptized infants it is interesting to read what Mechthilde records in a long passage describing a vision of Heaven: 'The unbaptized children under five years are held in special honour . . . They have no crowns for God can reward them for nothing, yet He has given them this favour that

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

they live in great peace.' Then, as one can't help *hoping* that she knows more about this difficult matter than the theologians, she goes on to attempt some justification for her teachings. 'Some may wonder', she says, 'how I, a sinful being, can dare to write of such things, I say truly that had not God, seven years ago, bestowed a singular grace on my heart, I should have kept silence and never dared to write. But thanks to God's mercy, the writing did me no harm, owing to the clear reflexion of my sinfulness which stood openly before my soul and the noble nature of Grace which lies in all true gifts of God.'

Again regarding another disturbing question — that of the relative number of lost and saved Catholics — she thus addresses God. 'If Thy righteousness companions Thy Compassion

How is Thy mercy so great?

Then our Lord spoke a true word thus:

I say to thee by my Divine fidelity

That there are more in Holy Church

Who go straight to Heaven

Than go down to Hell.

For righteousness has its own constant power

Even if stained by sin

And that I will never take from it.'

Of the virtues she writes: 'Alas! if only I had had them and had perfected them truly in all things. That I would have regarded as the highest contemplation of which I have ever heard. For of what use are lofty words without works of mercy.'

But for the encouragement of those who are trying against difficulties to persevere with contemplative prayer she has this fine sentence: 'God has enough of all good things save of intercourse with the soul; of that He can never have enough'.

One section entitled *Of sevenfold perfection* runs thus: 'To be gladly unhonoured, gladly disregarded, gladly alone, gladly still, gladly to be lowly, gladly to be esteemed, gladly to be one of many'.

Of small sins she writes: 'What hinders spiritual people most of all from full perfection is that they pay so little heed to small sins. I tell you truly, that when I refrain from a smile which would hurt no one, or cherish some sourness in my heart, or feel impatient at my own pain, my soul becomes so dark and my senses so dull and my heart so cold, that I must weep and lament piteously, long greatly and humbly make confession of my lack of virtue. Then only does grace come again to my soul and I creep back like a beaten dog to the kitchen.'

Of suffering she says: 'So long as the creature can sin, he requires suffering as much as virtue'.

The theory that Mechthilde herself acted for a time as Superior of her Convent receives support from a passage entitled: *How a Prior or Prioress or other Superior should act towards subordinates*.

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

The practical counsels here advanced go far to show that this great soul was not a mere dreamer. She begins: 'Great danger lies in power. So that when someone says, "Thou art now Superior!" God alone knows what temptations beset thee.' She then touches on the various classes of persons to whom in her ruling capacity she has responsibilities, the brethren, the guests, the sick etc. — we quote only a few sentences. In regard to the sick she says: 'Thou shalt go daily to the sick-house and heal the sick with comforting words of God,

And cheer them gently with earthly joys
For God is rich above all price . . .
Thou shalt also go to the kitchen
To make sure that the needful provision is good;
That neither thy meanness nor the cook's laziness
May rob the Lord of sweet music in choir;
For no hungry priest may sing sweetly
Nor study deeply,
Thus might our Lord lack service
Which is His due.'

These scanty quotations may incline readers to face the higher visionary parts of this engaging work. The great message which Mechthilde, like other genuine mystics, brings to us from her privileged experiences is that of the immeasurable love of God. She was well acquainted with the hideous disorders and abuses which in her day were hindering the Church's mission, and she castigates them severely. It is all the more comforting that her spirit remains so serene and her teaching so charged with encouragement and hope.

DOM ALPHEGE SHEBBEARE

Newman's Doctrine on Holy Scripture by J. Seynaeve. Pp. 408 + 160 (Basil Blackwell) Unbound 63s., Bound 70s.

THE 408 pages are a description and critique of Newman's contribution to biblical study; the 160 additional pages contain a number of previously unedited works. The latter section of the volume will be regarded by everyone as of the highest interest, whether or not they are interested in the doctrinal section. The main Newman work here published is a series of papers on Inspiration written in 1861-63. In addition there is a sermon for the feast of St Luke, a work of biblical criticism on the relationship between the canonical and deuterocanonical books, and some speeches delivered at Bible Society meetings. These are not works of biblical scholarship, but are non-technical, apologetic works touching upon scripture questions. Like all Newman's works, they are full of original suggestions and methods of treatment; and their spirit is shown in such sentences as: 'Do not let us make real difficulties for the cause of truth by running away from fancied ones' (p. 65*). 'If dogmatism is indefensible in the province of dogma, what is it but simply offensive,

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

mocking and disgraceful in the province of free inquiry. It is preposterous for science to talk of its religious "creed" (p. 64*).

Father Seynaeve discusses two questions, with which Newman was concerned. The first is that of the *obiter dicta*, and the nature and extent of inspiration. In this matter, Newman has perhaps little to contribute. It is, however, necessary to consider what he has, since it is so often brought against him. He is accused of holding an untenable view with regard to the extent of inspiration.

Father Seynaeve does a double service to Newman's memory. He reminds us, in the first place, how diffidently Newman put forward his doctrine (a) as a strictly personal view; (b) in full submission to the judgement and authoritative decision of the Holy See; and (c) with no desire that his opinion should prevail, unless it be the truth. There is certainly not the slightest suspicion of Newman's personal faith. In the second place, Father Seynaeve thinks that Newman's error would never have occurred if he had had the advantages we have to-day both of the explicit guidance of two papal encyclicals, and of a much deeper understanding of the literary forms and their relation to inspiration than was possible to anyone in Newman's time. It seems quite clear that those who attacked Newman at the time, and the others who kept to traditional views were on the whole sheltered from any temptation to discuss this question deeply through their ignorance of the force of the attack from the new school of biblical higher criticism. To-day all Catholic biblicalists are aware of the grave difficulties of the situation, and they have been able to meet them by the admission of the existence of various literary forms. One Catholic view at the time which seemed to make a serious attempt to meet the challenge of higher criticism and scientific agnosticism was the heterodox theory of the French François Lenormant and the German Rohling, a view condemned seven years after Newman's death. Some have thought that Newman may have been influenced by this.

On principle, it seems that Newman was contending for the admission that there is a human element in the scriptures besides the divine, and that it was sometimes possible to distinguish it. This principle is certainly admitted to-day by Catholics, since we allow that statements relating to physical nature, presupposing the ancient view of the earth and sun and firmament, do not fall under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as far as their formal scientific truth is concerned.

Another principle of Newman's was that the bible is a religious book, and that inspiration only concerns religion. By 'religion' Newman meant faith and morals, but including all historical facts recorded. 'What', he writes, 'is the whole history, as it is traced out in Scripture from Genesis to Esdras, and thence on to the end of the Acts of the Apostles, what is it but a manifestation of Divine Providence . . . Its pages breathe of providence and grace, of our Lord; and of His work and teaching, from beginning to end. It views facts in those relations in which neither

ancients . . . nor moderns can view them. In this point of view, it has God for its author . . . ' (p. 167).

Father Seynaeve points out that many Catholic biblicists to-day claim that all inspired writing does actually refer primarily to matters of faith and morals, even though we may not always or immediately be able to see it. In other words, they admit what Newman meant when he insisted that the Bible is essentially a religious book.

Newman nowhere gives categorically an instance of an *obiter dictum*. He suggests one or two *possible* cases; but is not anxious to commit himself to a statement of anything which is definitely human and in no sense inspired. However, Father Seynaeve thinks that, through his lack of realization of the way in which God uses human instruments in inspiration, and his ignorance of literary forms, Newman did in 1884 express himself in some places in a way that would appear incompatible with the doctrine of plenary inspiration that Newman himself fully admitted.

In the matter of hermeneutics, which is the more interesting part of the book, we find much of interest, though all occurs in a non-systematic, non-technical form. We learn how Newman rediscovered from the Fathers and expressed in his own way some of the most characteristic tendencies of modern hermeneutics. Very important in this respect is Father Seynaeve's chapter on the Unity and Harmony of the Bible, showing Newman's stress on the importance of the Old Testament for the understanding of the New. Important again is Newman's view of the different senses of the Scriptures. He seems to admit what has been called to-day the plenary sense, over and above the direct literal sense, and distinct from the typological sense, which only concerns facts. 'We have no warrant for putting a limit to the sense of words which are not human but divine' (p. 313). With regard to the interpretation of messianic prophecies, Father Seynaeve would accord to Newman a place alongside Pascal as a forerunner of the modern view of prophecies being fulfilled only as to their substance.

There is one important matter in which it is my view that Father Seynaeve has read too rigid a sense into Newman's terms, and consequently created difficulties in his defence of Newman, which he never need have felt. He is worried by Newman's persistent defence of the School of Alexandria over that of Antioch, together with his frequent insistence on a mystical, allegorical or spiritual sense as often coming before the literal one. After reading carefully all Father Seynaeve's evidence, I am not at all convinced that Newman at any time underestimated the 'literal' sense of the scriptures in the sense of the *Spiritus Paraclitus*. Newman uses 'literal' in the popular English sense, as found in English dictionaries. In this sense, the 'literal' meaning would be the customary, natural meaning of the words used, whether or not this was the sense the author intended. Thus, the 'literal' meaning of Genesis

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

According to this usage, would be that the world was created in seven days of twenty-four hours each, and that the light was created before the sun. I would say that we can only know the exact meaning of 'literal', 'spiritual', 'allegorical', or 'mystical' in Newman's writings, by an examination of the context. In any case, Newman allows that Scripture always uses 'the plainest and most exact form of speech which human language admits of', in order to convey divine truths (p. 332), and that the Word of God in any case must have 'mainly one, and only one sense' (p. 331).

Newman's quarrel with the School of Antioch was not primarily a question of scripture hermeneutics, but a spirit of criticism and rationalism. The spirit of Antioch was a spirit which sought in the letter arguments to undermine the pure Christian faith. It boasted that it kept to the letter of scripture, as it boasted that it was guided by logic. In both Newman saw under the surface a narrow rationalism not unlike that of the 'Liberals' of his own century. He was not, however, incapable of recognizing the greatness of the best representatives of the Antiochene school, as can be seen from his 'Church of the Fathers'.

Father Seynaeve's book is expensive; but it is a definitive work of scholarship rendering all previous works on the subject out-of-date. It would have been still dearer, were it not for a grant of the Belgian State. Mainly for this work, the author was granted Louvain's highest degree in theology, being the hundredth Master of Theology since the French revolution. The book is an obvious necessity for Catholic libraries, as well as for Newman and Scripture scholars. It must be the most important work of pure Newman Scholarship for many years, and will be standard for its subject. Father Seynaeve is a Belgian White Father, but the book appears in beautiful, clear English. The production and binding are excellent. As the book was printed in Belgium, a number of printer's mistakes still remain, especially in the Newman opuscula. But in most cases the reader will easily detect the true reading.

H. FRANCIS DAVIS

La Preuve Réelle de Dieu. Etude Critique by P. Defever, S.J. Pp. 146 (Edition Universelle, Brussels).

ON the last page of this book P. Defever observes that P. Maréchal in the famous *Cinquième Cahier* of his *Point de départ de la métaphysique* 'never made use of any notional analysis, any abstract deduction, except for the subsidiary purpose of making explicit and throwing light upon this unique metaphysical experience [that of *dépassement*], enjoyed and duly recognized by reflexion'; it is P. Defever's great merit to have made this reflexion (*réflexion totale*) the basis of his discussion and to have brought out in detail what we should understand by *dépassement* in the context of P. Maréchal's doctrine. It is the process which puts us into cognitive

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

contact with God: 'what guarantees God's transcendence — the turning-point of the whole argument — is the intimate experience, made available to us by 'total reflexion', of the transcendence of our power of affirmation in regard to all determinations of possible objects' (p. 124); thus a knowledge of God arises 'when we see ourselves actuated and at the same time held in check by an object represented to us, when by reflexion on our direct knowledge we thus realize that we transcend the object. At this precise moment we grasp ourselves as effects of the final end of our activity of affirmation . . . There is really, at that moment, an actual identity of the rational knowing subject with God, with God grasped not directly in himself but in his effects, that is, in our activity of knowing an object and transcending it' (p. 125). Although we have no intuition of God in the strict sense, this 'intuition of our act of transcending the finite' is 'a true presence of God' without which 'we should have no knowledge of God at all; thanks to which our knowledge of him is direct, personal, enriching the human personality' (p. 107). Indeed, 'this proof coincides with our reality as we make it to be if we are faithful to ourselves and authentic' (p. 94). All this the present reviewer finds highly satisfactory. P. Defever adds for good measure some very penetrating and sympathetic criticisms of existentialist writers; the presentation of his argument is magisterial.

But it must be confessed that the earlier part of the book is disconcerting. There is the great difficulty of the technical language used by P. Maréchal which P. Defever does little to explain. There is a certain amount of rather pointless subtlety. But the chief reason for obscurity, if one may offer an opinion which is not likely to be widely shared, lies in P. Maréchal's acceptance of certain Thomist doctrines which do not seem to have any necessary connexion with his conclusions about our knowledge of God. Our knowledge of material things, which must be the starting-point of all metaphysical analyses, is complicated, in this account, by a theory of abstraction from sense-presented materials which is bound up with a theory of 'matter' considered as 'passivity' and as only 'potentially intelligible. There might seem to be presuppositions here which require examination. Although P. Defever successfully defends P. Maréchal from the charge of conceptualism or lack of realism in regard to our knowledge of God, it is not clear that this charge is unjustified in the present instance. And it is perhaps partly as a result of this deficiency at the initial stage that we find an insistence in the middle of the book upon deductive procedures, general principles and analogical notions which is not easily reconcilable with the concluding passage above quoted.

It remains that P. Defever's study is a distinguished piece of work which should be read by all teachers of scholastic philosophy. Others are not likely to make very much of it unless they can be persuaded to read it backwards; in that case they will come across considerations of the highest importance for the present situation in philosophy.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Freedom. A New Analysis by Maurice Cranston. Pp. viii + 177 (Longmans) 6s. 6d.

PROFESSIONAL philosophers will not find that this book puts a fresh complexion upon the contemporary debate about freedom, but they will not find it without interest. Unprofessional philosophers will find that it lets them in on this debate in a relatively painless way. The discussion reaches no very definite results but should make it easier for others to do so.

The first of the book's three parts begins by discussing the ways in which 'freedom' is commonly used, and the second chapter reaches the rather obvious conclusion that 'apart from a particular context (and not always its context) there is no knowing what the word "freedom" may refer to' (p. 22). But the obviousness of the conclusion does not take away from the fact that the analysis was worth making; I hope Mr Cranston will not disapprove of the suggestion — intended in no uncomplimentary sense — that it could usefully be put into the hands of intelligent schoolboys (the same applies to the second part, in which the differences between English liberalism and the French, German and American varieties are discussed — a historical excursus, on the whole). The later chapters of the first part consider the meanings which philosophers have given to 'freedom'. Mr Cranston remarks at one point that he is 'tempted to think that freedom from the constraints that emanate from the non-rational parts of our own nature is indeed the most important freedom we can have or strive for' (p. 52). But he considers that the 'theorists of *rational freedom*' have been offering a definition of freedom and that it is an unsatisfactory one. I should say that some of them have been perfectly aware that they were not offering the sort of lexicographical definition which emerges from Mr Cranston's earlier chapters. They were trying to persuade people to look below the surface of human experience; in other words they were being metaphysicians. Mr Cranston's sympathies are, in fact, divided between the philosophical analysts and the 'reactionary' philosophers, and he himself candidly informs us in his Introduction.

It is not until we get to the third part that we come to grips with the main philosophical problem. Mr Cranston points out usefully against Prof. Ayer that the 'libertarian' claim is that I must be able to say with truth not merely 'I could have acted otherwise' but 'it was psychologically possible for me to have chosen or decided otherwise' (p. 128). The real question, Mr Cranston tells us, is 'whether our choices or decisions are predictable', and the analysts have not eliminated it. At this point we must consider a passage of some length in which Mr Cranston discusses the possibility of an 'intuition' of free will.

In a case where some people have an intuitive certainty and others do not, the question still remains as to which is the true belief. And even if we admitted the doctrine — which God forbid — that feelings are more reliable sources of knowledge than intelligence, this feeling

of free will would only reinforce the case against determinism if *everybody* felt it, in which event, [*sic*] the case for determinism would never have been seriously argued.

Do many people in fact have a feeling of free will? Of this I am extremely doubtful. What we *do* have is the *feeling of freedom*. I have discussed in the first part of this essay the feeling we sometimes have that we are *unconstrained*, and subject to no pressure in reaching our decision. A person who is sometimes subject to neurotic compulsion may possibly have a special feeling on those occasions when his decisions are *not* subject to neurotic compulsion. But this would be neither a feeling nor an 'intuition' of the freedom of the will, and it is probably only thought to be such because of the unfortunate use of the term 'human freedom' to describe both the absence of constraint or burdens *and* the freedom of the will.

Secondly, we sometimes have a sense of agency, a sense of being the cause of things. Such is the feeling from which some theorists have suggested we get our idea of causality—the wrong idea of causality incidentally, if it is meant to be the analogue of causality as understood by scientists—and which differentiates our active experience from our passive experience. It is perhaps this consciousness of agency which has been described as a feeling or intuition that the will is free. Yet while it is true that I am certain that it is I (and nobody else) who dip this pen into the inkwell, I have no certainty that the action was unpredictable. I suspect that Paul Weiss and the others have again been misled by the language of the problem into confusing the self-determined act with the unpredictable act (pp. 147-48).

These paragraphs do not seem to me to give the full weight to the libertarian's case. The libertarian would claim that this intuitive certainty is possessed by the great majority, and that those who do not possess it have been deprived of it by taking up with some special philosophical or theological theory which has confused their minds. On p. 149 Mr Cranston observes that we have 'found no way of reconciling belief in the freedom of the will with the common assumption of scientists that everything in the universe is in principle predictable'. But why should the 'scientists' dictate to us the terms of the problem? Would it not be more pertinent to remark that this belief of scientists is not reconcilable with the common assumption that some human acts, at any rate, are freely (avoidably) chosen? The reduction of intuitive certainty to a feeling as opposed to an act of intelligence must also be contested. The claim is as Dr Samuel Johnson observed (quoted by Mr Cranston on the previous page), that 'we *know* that the will is free'. But Mr Cranston does not seem to recognize anything which is not scientifically *verifiable* as a piece of genuine knowledge. This positivist prejudice becomes not less but more queer to me the more often I meet it. It seems so obvious that tests are only evidence *for* something (and always, of themselves, inconclusive—

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

each particular experiment might always be a 'chance'), and that without evidence of something (that is, direct or intuitive awareness of something) we could not conduct experiments at all — even to be uncertain of something we must have some sort of experienced, unquestionable basis of fact. And it is beside the point to object that such a basis cannot itself be verified by a test. It needs none. If it cannot be *proved* to others, but only *recognized* by them, there is no room for scandal, especially when the recognition normally occurs, as in our present case of the will's freedom. A man's *certainty* is unaffected by other people's uncertainty.

In the second and third of the paragraphs quoted Mr Cranston distinguishes most properly between the possibility that an action of mine was unconstrained (not forced upon me *against* my will) and the possibility that it was an action *chosen* by me, an action which I could have *avoided*. But this does not seem to me to justify the suggestion that we are not normally aware of *control*, in the sense of an ability to choose between possible actions. It is that to which we refer when we speak of 'deciding to do something'. (This is the context, I should say, in which the idea of metaphysical causality arises — Mr Cranston seems to be interested only in the 'scientific' kind). But in the fourth and fifth paragraphs Mr Cranston seems to be withdrawing to some extent from the sceptical position which he has just adopted. *Recent* decisions, he thinks, do present themselves to us as choices. I suggest that if he would *concentrate upon the present*, he would cease to have any doubt about it.

It is satisfactory to find that Mr Cranston does not accept the (determinist) 'emotive theory' of ethics, according to which in making ethical judgements 'we want to discourage actions of the sort blamed and to encourage those of the sort praised' (p. 152) and a moral action is simply one that *can be brought about or prevented* by praise and blame' (p. 154); the libertarian case is said to offer us 'a better, more commonsense account of ethical judgements' (p. 155). That is to put it mildly.

We have seen that the real question, according to Mr Cranston, is whether our choices are predictable. The last chapter, accordingly, is devoted to the topic of predictions. To say that we have freedom of will certainly involves the unpredictability of certain acts; but it is to narrow the field of enquiry unduly, I should say, to confine it to this unpredictability, and it seems to have led Mr Cranston into a weak position. All he sets out to show is that there are valid objections to the theory that all actions *are* predictable, and even if he did show this he would not have shown that there are acts which are freely willed. Moreover his arguments, although suggesting that accurate predictions of certain kinds are impossible *in fact* for particular reasons, do not seem to me to invalidate the *principle* of prediction which is the real issue. Mr Cranston urges that we cannot make predictions to ourselves about ourselves or to other people about themselves because we cannot take into account in making the prediction the effect which the prediction

itself will cause — if we try to take account of it we are in a vicious circle; and, even if we keep our predictions secret, there are still certain kinds of action which we cannot accurately predict:

To predict that Keats would compose the line — ‘Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness’ — the psychologist would have to observe all the factors involved in making it up, all the process that led to its composition. But the poet’s utterance of that line to himself is one of those factors, part of that process. Therefore the observer would not have all his material until the line had been said, until it was, so to speak, made up. Thus he could not predict it because he could not say it was going to happen before it happened.

We may take also the example of an invention. The date is not recorded, but let us suppose that the corkscrew was invented at ten p.m. on 1 March 1650. Now if it were possible for that invention to be predicted — for it to be announced prior to ten p.m. on 1 March 1650, that a particular man would invent the corkscrew — then the observer who made this prediction would be the first person to announce the invention of the corkscrew. But if he knows about the corkscrew before the ‘inventor’ has invented it, he, *the observer*, must be the true inventor (pp. 166–7).

I quote those paragraphs in full because I find them so puzzling. The principle of predictability is surely that every event has *determining* causes, so that anyone who could know the causes of an event would thereby know the event. Why should a supporter of this principle have to admit that there were no such causes of Keats’s composing his line? That nobody might succeed in getting to know them seems to be neither here nor there. The point which chiefly interests Mr Cranston is, if I understand him, that the ‘utterance’ of the line is a part of the ‘making it up’ which would have to be known before the whole ‘making it up’ could be known; and I cannot see that this is a point about anything, unless it is the same as that quoted on the next page from Professor Popper’s ‘important essay *Indeterminism in Quantum Physics*’ that some predictions could not be excogitated until *immediately* before the event to be predicted so that they could not be predicted (*uttered*) at all for lack of time. And that does not seem important. Again, is it more than a verbal difficulty that the prediction of an invention should prove to be itself the invention? By speaking of an ‘inventor’ we could claim to mean ‘the first to think of it apart from anybody who might foresee him as doing so’.

Determinism, I make bold to say, whether theistic or atheistic, is overthrown by nothing more or less than our *awareness* that we are ourselves the causes of the discrepancy between what we could do and what we do in fact — defective causes, causes in a peculiar, negative sense. I cannot expect Mr Cranston to follow me into these obscurities of metaphysics. But I would ask him whether he has not been led into some queer by-paths through his assumption that we are never really

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

ware of anything. 'Without grounds for doubt the subject would not be philosophy', he remarks in his concluding sentence. It is sad that one should have to repeat yet again that even our doubts must be based on certainties. Nevertheless Mr Cranston does give his vote against determinism, and he deserves our gratitude for a readable and informative book.

Leibniz: Discourse on Metaphysics, translated with an introduction and notes by P. G. Lucas and L. Grint. Pp. xxx + 63 (Manchester University Press) 7s. 6d.

THE series of philosophical classics to which this volume belongs is doing good service in providing reliable texts of works which have not been previously available in a convenient form. Mr Lucas and Mr Grint are to be congratulated upon the care which they have lavished upon their task and the high standard of scholarship which they have set. In the Preface they tell us that, although the establishment of the text is their immediate aim, 'the ulterior aim is to draw attention to Leibniz's metaphysics as he conceived and wrote it . . . to this aim the *Discourse* is unusually propitious'. One may therefore regret that the section of the Introduction headed 'The Metaphysics of the *Discourse*' fills less than four pages; many readers will need further help to understand how Leibniz was led 'to conceive and express the fundamental analogy of each substance "expressing" God and the universe, which we believe to have been the impulse that produced the act of philosophical analysis in which Leibniz first conceived his system' (p. xxi). And it is a pity that their terms of reference did not allow the editors to discuss such a passage as the following, which I regard as of the first importance and therefore quote in full: 'Neither am I able to approve the opinion of some moderns who boldly maintain that what God does is not of the highest degree of perfection, and that he could have acted much better. For it seems to me the consequences of this sentiment are altogether contrary to the glory of God. *Ut minus malum habet rationem boni, ita minus bonum habet rationem mali*. And to act with less perfection than one could have acted, is to have acted imperfectly. To point out that an architect could have done better is to find fault with his work. This also goes against Holy Scripture, when it assures us of the goodness of the works of God. For since imperfections descend to infinity, in whatever way God had made his works they would still have been good in comparison with less perfect works, if that were enough: but a thing is barely praiseworthy if it is only to be praised in this way. I believe also that an infinity of passages will be found in Divine Scripture and the Holy Fathers in favour of my sentiment, but that hardly any will be found for that of these moderns, which in my opinion is unknown to all antiquity, and is only based on our having too little knowledge of the general harmony of the universe and of the hidden reasons for the conduct of God which makes us judge rashly that many things could have been improved. Besides which these moderns take their stand

on some unsolid subtleties, for they imagine that nothing is so perfect that there is not something more perfect, which is an error.

'They also believe that they are providing thus for the liberty of God, as if it were not the highest liberty to act perfectly, according to sovereign reason. For to believe that God acts in anything without having any reason for his will, besides that it seems that this cannot be, is a sentiment which conforms little with his glory; for example let us suppose that God chooses between A and B, and that he takes A without having any reason for preferring it to B, I say that this action of God would at least not be praiseworthy; for all praise ought to be founded in some reason, which is lacking here *ex hypothesi*. Whereas I hold that God does nothing for which he does not deserve to be glorified.'

I hope the editors will not be shocked at the omission from this passage of their *apparatus criticus*.

DOM ILLTYD TRETHOWAN

The Meaning of Existence by Dom Mark Pontifex and Dom Illtyd Trethowan. Pp. ix+179 (Longmans) 12s. 6d.

THIS book combines a good deal of metaphysical acumen with a certain weakness in the use of logical techniques. I am convinced that the authors have an important and original contribution to make and I hope that they will continue their work of elucidation by clarifying their position in relation to the kind of analyses of existence that would be made in terms of Russell's theory of descriptions, Wittgenstein's doctrines of meaning and similar contemporary work.

The thesis put forward is that the term 'existence' has a double reference. When I say 'x exists' I refer first to the object x but also to the source of x's existence. For when I say 'Both x and y exist' I am not referring to a characteristic which x and y share, since those characteristics wherein x and y differ exist just as certainly as do those wherein they are alike, and hence their existence is common to both x and y but yet not in the sense that a common property is common. At the same time it is the fact that both x and y do exist that enables us to assert true propositions about them. In so far as we assert merely that they *exist* we assert nothing particular and specific, but when we assert that their existence is the *specific* existence of x and y we delimit our assertion and particularize it. Thus the existence which is common to x and y is of itself not specific, unlimited, is indeed — to latinize — infinite. Hence, on analysis, the assertion of the existence of finite beings reveals a reference to infinite being.

What kind of cogency is this analysis supposed to have? Dom Illtyd suggests that a phenomenalist analysis of 'exist' (*esse* means *percipi*) is logically irrefutable, and that the disagreement between a phenomenalist and himself is neither logical nor empirical but concerns a difference in metaphysical vision. At the level of metaphysical argument, however, a possible defence of the thesis and a refutation of contrary views is shown to be possible by the authors' able and discriminating discussion of

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Thomist and Anselmian views. The book is in two parts of which the first by Dom Mark expounds the thesis and outlines the Thomist alternative; the second by Dom Illtyd, outlines a discussion of various other views as well as some extremely illuminating applications. The points of criticism which I should wish to develop are three-fold. They concern the logical status of 'existence'; the possible different uses and senses of 'existence'; and the nature of the argument to an infinite source of existence. These I shall take in reverse order.

At first sight, it is difficult to see that the argument which is being introduced is not only a kind of inversion of the ontological argument — so much the authors would, I think, admit — but an inversion of an Idealist kind. For — and this is one of their logical barbarisms — they continually speak of the 'assertibility of objects'. If this means anything, it clearly does not mean that we are able to assert objects but rather that we are able to assert true propositions about objects. Assertibility is a property of propositions, not of objects. Now the argument runs that in asserting the existence of finites we find ourselves referring to an existent infinite. In other words it is suggested that the assertion of God's existence is bound up with the assertion of finites. But even should we grant that this was so all that would have been proved was that the existence of God was somehow bound up in our thought with the existence of finite beings. That God exists outside the mind it would still remain — even on the premises of the argument — to show. At times the authors seem aware of this difficulty but they never meet it. Dom Illtyd rejects the correspondence theory of truth but does not give reasons for so doing nor is any other epistemological justification put forward.

Secondly, I find the analysis of 'existence' offered far too abstract. The authors never enquire how we use the word 'exist' in actual speech and never consider examples of its use such as 'There exists a prime number between "n" and "m";' 'Do ghosts actually exist?' and so on. An examination of what these sentences mean would surely help to throw light on what 'existence' means. Even the propositions which they do consider are not analysed with sufficient rigour. For instance, Dom Illtyd paraphrases their analysis of existence as meaning 'things as related to God'. Presumably therefore the proposition 'Jones exists' means 'Jones is a thing related to God' (Does Dom Illtyd consider the notion of a thing unrelated to God as self-contradictory? If so, he should surely claim logical cogency for his analysis. If not, what in his view would a thing unrelated to God be like?) But what does the proposition 'God exists' mean on this analysis? It can only mean surely 'God is a thing related to God' and would seem to be a tautology and therefore not an assertion of anything. It is in fact paradoxical to say 'The source of existence exists' (cf. the Latin, *esse est*). This raises various questions which the authors do not consider. Thirdly, Dom Illtyd asserts in the face of Kant, Moore, Russell *et hoc genus omne* that existence is a predicate but a different kind of predicate. I am disposed to cheer at

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

this display of philosophical valour rather than to condemn: I even suspect that he may be right in some sense (so did G. E. Moore), but a point of such importance ought to have been argued at length.

This is a book for which one is grateful. Dom Mark's clarity of exposition deserves special mention and I found Dom Illtyd's short discussion of Marcel's writings extraordinarily good. On the main points I am sure Dom Illtyd is right. The existence of God is not, properly speaking, *inferred* (Cook Wilson has put this point well) and the acceptance or rejection of a theistic metaphysics is a choice which lies outside the realm of logic as such. If this review has been largely critical, it is because, like a philosophical Oliver Twist, I am asking for more.

ALASDAIR C. MACINTYRE

Existentialism from Within by E. L. Allen. Pp. ix+185 (Routledge and Kegan Paul) 18s.

THIS book is an attempt at a sympathetic presentation of what is of permanent value in the existentialist movement and consists in a criticism from a Christian point of view of the works of Heidegger, Sartre, Jaspers and Marcel. The importance of the book as a whole would seem to be the emphasis which the philosophers discussed put upon personal responsibility in a state of affairs which is far from what it should be. They all admit that there is something wrong with the world, and go on to say that something can be done about it, and that something ought to be done about it by every individual if he is to become a real man.

These men are right to insist upon the overwhelming importance of the individual. We should start by knowing ourselves in our situation, and from there should go out to others and so return to ourselves by finding ourselves in others. This idea has in some cases led to an explicit knowledge of God and all that Sartre has to see is that man's absurdity without God is really evidence for God's existence. They are right also to insist that a man should not take over his ideas ready-made from others, but should live them and make them his own by his own experience. Only by so doing can he become the individual man he was created to be.

My main criticism of Dr Allen is that in his desire to make these existentialists Christian, he seems to water down Christianity rather than to show the inner meaning of existentialism. This seems to be particularly the case when he is dealing with Jaspers: thus on p. 142 he says 'the evidence available in the Gospels seems to me to put beyond doubt that Jesus thought of himself as a man dependent on God. The witness of John is if anything more definite on this point than that of the Synoptists'. Taken in isolation, and as dealing with one side of the Incarnation, this sentence is quite orthodox, but in the context Dr Allen is using it to deny the 'God-Man of Christian dogma'. If we assume that he has read the first chapter of St John's Gospel, we must conclude that his idea of the God-Man of Christian dogma is far from orthodox.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

The analysis of Heidegger is difficult to follow, but sometimes valuable: 'Man looks forward before he looks back', and looks back so as to see what he is to do in the future, and 'He sees himself always as one to whom he has to take up an attitude, about whom he has to do something. That is what is meant by saying that he is care. A being who lives with his face towards the future asks himself all the while: What am I to become?' This makes it possible to understand how a man can logically take an ethical view of life while ignoring God. When Heidegger says 'Death is not the axe which cuts down the tree, it is the fruit that grows on it. Death so understood isolates me and makes of me an individual. It is my death not that of the multitude to which I belong' he has arrived at something important even if the Christian interpretation is omitted. He has seen the unity which must hold both life and death and that it is not enough to say that they are contradictory. But it is strange that he cannot see that far from Being's holding out hazardously against the Nothing (as he puts it), since there is Being it must have won the victory over the Nothing and can never return to Nothing — in fact that Death (which might be called the Nothing) is the door between two Beings, not just the fruit of one Being, that Death is the supreme example of change, change being the occasion for the Nothing to be seen in Being. But when we have found Being in face of, and in spite of the Nothing, as it were, it does not seem reasonable to suppose that Being returns to the Nothing. Having seen that Life and Death have a unity beyond them, I should have thought that it was a simple step to see that there must be a unity beyond Being and Nothing which gives meaning to all experience and which is the transcendent God.

In dealing with Sartre Dr Allen writes: 'While I do not think that, strictly speaking, Sartre has the right to say more than that he chooses the second alternative (i.e. using freedom for freedom and not against freedom) and appeals to others to do the same, I am glad that in fact he has assumed a value independent of freedom which enables him to describe one exercise of freedom as right and the other as wrong. Authenticity is superior to inauthenticity.' This is comforting and is, I suppose, the way for Sartre to find God: that not everything can be neatly fitted into its place logically in a closed system but that there is always something behind what is immediately before us — that God is to be found in the good that lies behind the Authentic. Elsewhere Dr Allen is right to criticize Sartre for recognizing the sense of responsibility and then emptying it of all meaning by denying God. Sartre has no right to *argue* that the human situation is absurd — if existence is absurd there is nothing more to be done, but if he has argued to this conclusion from premisses which he has assumed, he should have no alternative but to admit his assumptions and premisses wrong. He should be able to see that the power of the mind to see the absurd is the strongest proof that the whole of existence cannot be absurd.

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

Jaspers is right to say that God is not to be demonstrated but is to be met with in the exercise of our freedom, but he becomes more difficult to understand when he goes on to say 'I must recognize not only that I do not know God, but even that I do not know whether I believe. Faith is no possession. It confers no secure knowledge, but it gives certainty in the practice of life.' What can this mean? Surely the phrase 'I do not know whether I believe' is little different from and certainly consistent with 'I doubt?' In that case faith has boiled down to expediency: something that may be of use and which could hardly do any harm. But this is not going to do much good to a man when he meets the difficulties which a moral life inevitably involves.

On p. 136, still dealing with Jaspers, Dr Allen says 'One cannot at the same time be ruled by an infallible authority and guided by freedom. One cannot both possess the truth and seek it.' This I deny. Truth is not like a cake, as the statement would suggest. Until you know that there is truth you can hardly look for it, but to know that there is truth is to possess the truth already, or anyway part of it. A child possesses the truth when it says 'God exists' but if later it asks questions about that statement and comes to know it for itself instead of accepting because it was told it, it is then seeking the truth within the truth it possesses. In fact it would be better to say that one cannot seek the truth *until* one possesses it, and that the possession of truth at the start, with the certainty that we can know the truth, is a free gift of God.

Summarizing Marcel, Dr Allen says: 'that we live in the hearts of those we leave behind is not to be understood as a substitute for personal immortality but as a necessary complement of it'. To my mind this puts in an excellent way that consequence of the incarnation which we will enjoy in Heaven after death and which is most immediately conceivable and satisfying: it is something of which we can get a realization here on Earth. When Paul says 'eye hath not seen nor ear heard' he is referring to the union with God himself, while Marcel is referring to that union in knowledge and love which we will also have with our fellow men in Christ and which will be but a part of bliss.

Still summarizing Marcel, Dr Allen writes: 'Fidelity to God is not something separate from and an addition to fidelity to oneself and to the other. It is achieved rather in and through these', and this gives in its final and Catholic form the idea which is being put forward all through this book by the philosophers discussed.

DOM PHILIP JEBB

New Problems in Medical Ethics, edited by Dom Peter Flood, translated by M. G. Carroll and N. C. Reeves. Pp. iv + 259 (Mercier Press) 21s.

WE must be most grateful to Dom Peter Flood and to the translator for this quite adequate (though not quite faultless) English version of an important *Cahier Laënnec*. The *Cahiers* have a sufficiently high reputation in medical circles to give one confidence in the technical information

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

which is here provided, and it must be enough to recommend it in particular to confessors, who do not always receive in the course of their theological training a sufficient grounding in modern physiology (and psychology) for them to deal competently with certain classes of penitent. It is not suggested that they should set up as doctors or analysts, only that they should be aware of the sort of situation which calls for a doctor or an analyst and of the various factors which militate against full human responsibility in sexual matters. The first and second sections of this volume, on the sexual problems of the adolescent and intersexuality, are of particular relevance in this connexion. In the first the moral principles which should govern our attitude to masturbation are admirably set out in the same spirit as that which animated P. Oraison's book on sexual problems (reported in this REVIEW last October); in the second, the problems set by hermaphrodites and homosexuals are wisely and clearly discussed, and a large number of popular misconceptions most usefully dispelled. The profoundly theological, and therefore wholly realistic, approach to these questions which is here presented to the reader should do much to bring about a sane and balanced judgement on matters which are too often simply shunned through timidity. To get to the bottom of things should always be refreshing and encouraging. I can most conveniently describe M. Gengoux's article (to take only one example), 'Literary Psychoanalysis from Plato to Gide', by calling it first-class 'spiritual reading'.

The third section, on abortion, although in its own way equally excellent, need not detain us. But it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of P. Henri Bouillard's contribution to the fourth, on the Lourdes cures. 'It would be a fallacy', he observes, 'to conclude to a divine intervention from the mere absence of scientific explanation' (p. 249; cf. p. 243, where Dr Béhague seems to fall into this fallacy). 'It is the bond which connects it with holiness and Christian doctrine which makes a prodigy into a sign. It has to be interpreted by an open and active mind' (pp. 251-52). The twelve pages of this essay deserve to be read by all those who would call themselves educated Christians.

DOM ILLTYD TRETHOWAN

The Greeks and the Irrational by E. R. Dodds. (Sather Classical Lectures, Vol. XXV.) Pp. ix + 327. (University of California Press, Cambridge University Press, London) \$5.00

THESE Sather Classical Lectures by the Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford are devoted to the study of irrational elements in Greek religious thought and practice. As one would expect from the author, they contain plenty of original thinking and observation very well expressed. But they also provide an excellent introduction to some recent tendencies in the study of Greek religion which can be seen also in Nilsson's great *Geschichte der Griechischen Religion* and Cornford's *Principium Sapientiae*; in particular the 'shamanistic' explanation of the

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

origin of the Orphic-Pythagorean way of looking at human nature appears in all three books. Professor Dodds writes from a sturdily liberal-rationalist point-of-view which he indicates sufficiently clearly in his last chapter; but he is very far from the mentality of those noble liberals of an earlier generation, Gwen Raverat's Darwin uncles, of whom she says, 'They were quite unable to understand the minds of the poor, the wicked or the religious'. He makes much use of explanations derived from modern (mostly American) social psychology and anthropology, but he always presents them as tentative hypotheses and keeps them clearly separated from the facts which they are intended to explain, and he is conscious of the dangers of the 'nothing-but' sort of explanation. The following quotation illustrates the good sense with which, on the whole, he uses his fashionable tools. 'First, I do not expect this particular key, or any key, to open all the doors. The evolution of a culture is too complex a thing to be explained without residue in terms of any simple formula, whether economic or psychological, begotten of Marx or begotten of Freud. We must resist the temptation to simplify what is not simple. And secondly to explain origins is not to explain away values. We should beware of underrating the religious significance of the ideas I have discussed to-day, even where, like the doctrine of divine temptation, they are repugnant to our moral sense' (p. 49). The real difference between ourselves and Professor Dodds would, I think, begin to appear when we started to enquire what precisely we meant by 'religious significance'. But, though it is deep enough, it is not of a kind which need prevent us from reading his book with appreciation and agreement with many of his conclusions.

The value of the book is increased by the reprinting as appendices of two extremely valuable articles by Professor Dodds on *Maenadism* and *Theurgy*; the second is the best account yet available, certainly in English, perhaps in any language, of this curious magical perversion of religion so popular among the Neo-Platonists after Iamblichus.

A. H. ARMSTRONG.

The Trial of Blessed Oliver Plunkett by Alice Curtayne. Pp. vii + 239 (Sheed and Ward) 16s.

OUR generation has grown unhappily familiar with the technique of the 'frame-up' trial. This has at least one advantage, it certainly does enable us to understand more realistically the sufferings of our Catholic ancestors. The trial of Archbishop Plunkett may be said to be almost a text-book specimen example of the 'frame-up' trial. There is the working up of popular feeling, partly on a patriotic motive, partly under the stimulus of fear. There is the usual element of degraded and desperate men, committing perjury as the price of what they hope will be their relief from instant necessities. There is the judge, with an eye to his career and his patrons, directing the jury in the direction of a conviction and helping clumsy witnesses out of difficulties. And in the centre of all this foulness,

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

like a light in the darkness, shines out the victim-saint. The contrast is complete. He cares nothing for his own interests, not even his life, which he is entirely willing to offer to God. His only concern is to speak the truth and not to say anything that will unconsciously harm anyone else. His poise of serene humility is perfect — and his charity. Defend his life he will, as a matter of duty, with all the care he can, but, if he can help it, no one else must suffer in the process. As his just defence is battered down by the lies of the witnesses and the skilfully hostile comments of the Bench, there is a note of pathos in his remonstrances. But his dignity and serenity remain unmoved, and there is unmistakable sincerity in his 'Deo Gratias' when the iniquitous verdict of 'Guilty' is pronounced.

All this we can find in Miss Curtayne's *The Trial of Blessed Oliver Plunkett*, which grips the reader like the account of a contemporary trial scene. The historical background is very skilfully, vividly and accurately painted, and the running commentary is just what the reader wants. In this, too, Miss Curtayne has spared no pains to be historically accurate. The character of the Archbishop stands out magnificently in its courage and charity and prayerfulness. And the man, Oliver Plunkett, remains no symbol, but becomes a very real, individual human being. But for this one heroic central figure, the story is immensely sad. Poor Ireland was rent into factions as the result of the continued persecutions, and the least desirable elements come to the surface. England, its rulers and people, is completely cowed by the clever and utterly unscrupulous manœuvres of Shaftesbury and his gang. Although so much has been written about Blessed Oliver and although most of the substance of Miss Curtayne's book can be found in *The Trial of the Primate* by J. P. Curran, yet the book is certainly not redundant. It paints a complete picture where before there were only fragments.

We would only venture two small criticisms. By implication, it would seem as if the difficulties of the 'impossible' situation in which the poor King found himself are not sufficiently appreciated. And why is there no index?

DOM DUNSTAN PONTIFEX

A Hopkins Reader. Selected by John Pick. Pp. xxvii + 317 (Oxford University Press: Cumberlege) 21s.

At a time when it is a common complaint that books cost too much and contain too little, it is heartening to welcome one which makes so rich a return for its price of a guinea. Here is not only most of the best of Hopkins's poetry (though one questions certain omissions and admissions, the selection, is on the whole, wisely made), but also valuable selections from the journals, letters, and miscellaneous prose writings which have long been out of print. Indeed, the book would be well worth buying for the prose-selections alone. They are full of that astonishingly penetrative power which mark almost all Hopkins's writings. The journals, for instance, show us how the poet's search for 'inscape' in nature gave a

distinctive character to his perceptive faculties wherein intensity, sensitiveness and artistic objectivity are wonderfully co-ordinated. And how shrewd and illuminating is the literary criticism to be found in the letters to Dixon and Bridges, in particular the references to Tennyson, Swinburne and Browning. What other writer in the nineteenth century can match the wit and critical insight shown by such a passage as the following? 'Browning has, I think, many frigidities. Any untruth to nature, to human nature, is frigid. Now he has got a great deal of what came in with Kingsley and the Broad Church school, a way of a man bouncing up from table with his mouth full of bread and cheese and saying he meant to stand no blasted nonsense . . . The *Flight of the Duchess*, with the repetition of "My friend", is in this vein. Now this is *one* mood or vein of human nature, but they would have it all and look at all human nature through it. And Tennyson in his later works has been "carried away with their dissimulation". The effect of this style is a frigid bluster. A true humanity of spirit, neither mawkish on the one hand nor blustering on the other, is the most precious of all qualities in style . . . After all it is the breadth of his human nature that we most admire in Shakespeare' (p. 103).

The selections concerned with religion vary in interest and originality, but at their best they show Hopkins's remarkable gift for apt analogy and a welcome unwillingness to hand out mere textbook answers. See, for example the comparison on p. 281 between the Paraclete and a batsman: 'You have seen at cricket how when one of the batsmen at the wicket has made a hit and wants to score a run, the other doubts, hangs back, or is ready to run in again, how eagerly the first will cry "Come on, come on!" — a Paraclete is just that, something that cheers the spirit of man, with signals and with cries, all zealous that he should do something and full of assurance that he can, calling him on, springing to meet him half way, crying to his ears or to his heart: This way to do God's will, this way to save your soul, come on, come on!' Particularly to be recommended, too, is a succinct bit of theology on p. 306 in which Hopkins disposes of Bridges's misunderstanding of what a mystery is in religion: 'You do not mean by mystery what a Catholic does. You mean an interesting uncertainty, the uncertainty ceasing interest ceases also. This happens in some things; to you in religion. But a Catholic by mystery means an incomprehensible certainty: without certainty, without formulation there is no interest; the clearer the formulation the greater the interest. At bottom the source of interest is the same in both cases, in your mind and in ours; it is the unknown, the reserve of truth beyond what the mind reaches and still feels to be behind. But the interest a Catholic feels is, if I may say so, of a far finer kind than yours. Yours turns out to be a curiosity only; curiosity satisfied, the trick is found out (to be a little profane), the answer heard, it vanishes at once. But you know there are some solutions to, say, chess problems so beautifully ingenious, some resolutions of suspensions so lovely in music that even the feeling of

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

interest is keenest when they are known and over, and for some time survives the discovery. How must it then be when the very answer is the most tantalizing statement of the problem and the truth you are to rest in the most pointed putting of the difficulty!' It should now be clear that this book is no mere anthology: at present no other book exists which can equip one so well for a full understanding of Hopkins, an understanding all the more valuable for being drawn from his own writings.

DOM HILARY STEUERT

The Life and Work of Sophocles by F. J. H. Letters. Pp. ix + 310 (Sheed and Ward) 18s.

Is not drama largely lost on us if we are only able to appreciate it academically, if we can go no further than understand its language and praise its fine ideas? A recent presentation in Creole of Sophocles's *Antigone* at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, has shown that the Haitians can appreciate Greek drama emotionally as well as intellectually. The fatalism expressed by Creon was to them living drama, not just material for a thesis. We, on the other hand, cannot give the *Antigone* a like sympathy because we do not share with the Haitians any sort of voodoo to bring us, like them, close to the Greek notion of Fate. How then are we to make Greek Tragedy into something that is more like living drama? Mr Letters's book on Sophocles provides some help in answering the question. He makes it his aim 'to present with a minimum of speculation what we know of Sophocles and his age, and to use that knowledge in interpreting his work'.

What part of the knowledge that Mr Letters presents us with is of most importance in our search for this living drama? Let us follow our Haitian friends and make it our primary business to understand as much as we can of the Greek equivalent to Voodoo. Here we must turn to Mr Letters's treatment of Greek myth and legend. This is the most valuable section of his book. He has followed tragedy into its very roots first by some general remarks in his chapter on Sophocles as Dramatist and then by particularized references to each play as he deals with it in turn. The importance of the mythical framework of Greek Tragedy can scarcely be over-emphasized, and Mr Letters has rightly said that it is by virtue of its superiority over the myths of other countries that it has been able to provide living characters and not just personifications or types.

Next we ought to study the time in which Sophocles lived and wrote. First a criticism of Mr Letters's general method and second a criticism of two details. The arrangement of the book is in two parts. In the first the author has devoted chapters to the Time of Sophocles, to Sophocles as Man, as Poet, and as Dramatist. In the second he has dealt with the individual plays. By the time the general reader reaches the plays he will either have forgotten the details of the first part or have taken fright at the prospect of sheer analysis unrelieved by anything save the demolition of the opinions of other scholars. But the reader should be encouraged to continue

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

his interest by feeling himself in the right milieu at the time of following the plays. The background should be woven in with the plays in a way similar to the treatment of patriotism in the chapter on the Oedipus Coloneus. Regarding the two details calling for criticism, the first is the modern view that Athens was a slum, the second the old-fashioned view that Athenian leisure was the result of slavery. To the one we would say 'Athens may well have been a slum in comparison with modern standards, but was it so in comparison with ancient ones? Could anyone, in fact, have declaimed a "funeral speech" in praise of Juvenal's Rome?' To the other: 'Is it not strange that slavery should have to be brought in to account for Athenian leisure when the author himself has given other very adequate reasons for it? Surely the Athenians had more leisure because their life was so much simpler than ours, because their out-of-door habits scarcely needed a home, and because they did not waste so much time on their bodies.'

Finally, to love the plays we must understand the man. Sophocles was a mature dramatist because he had that perfect tension of opposites for which the Greeks were always striving. He was rarely unbalanced because he possessed the golden mean. In this respect he was superior to both Aeschylus and Euripides. We feel, however, that Mr Letters has over-painted the mediocrity aspect of Sophocles. In one of his essays on Henry James, Mr Graham Greene mentions the obsession which every great novelist must have in order to write well. Cannot the same be said of Sophocles? Was he not driven to write by some such obsession? By man's being torn asunder by duty and love, perhaps? It is hard to believe that the respectable, cultured, witty Athenian gentleman, of Mr Letters, was obsessed by anything. Oscar Wilde would have made a poor tragedian.

In sum Mr Letters's book does help us to make Greek Tragedy into something more like living drama even though we have had occasion to criticize it in parts. It is very well written, in a style that is imaginative as well as disciplined; it shows mature reflexion on the plays themselves, and — this to classical students — it goes a long way to brightening the work of Sophocles, so often dimmed in a 'mist of tears'.

DOM LAURENCE KELLY

Rousseau: Confessions. Translated and with an introduction by J. M. Cohen. Pp. 606 (Penguin Classics) 5s.

It is so easy to criticize Rousseau on his own admissions in the *Confessions*, and to guess at manipulations and embellishments in them, that the job scarcely seems worth doing. On the contrary, it is surprising that such a man born into such an age should have accomplished so much. That he did not altogether practise what he preached does not detract from the merit of what he said; most of it badly needed saying at the time. Even sentimental deism was an improvement on the atheism of men like Diderot and Grimm, and the 'philosophes' soon saw that he was wrecking

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

their efforts. Voltaire said of Rousseau in 1765 that he had done dreadful harm to the 'good cause' by making it odious at the moment when it was going to triumph. Rousseau's conviction that he was being persecuted from that quarter, a conviction that occupies a good many rather boring pages in the *Confessions*, was by no means entirely a delusion. The plea for the simple life was not made in the exaggerated form that Rousseau's opponents pretended in order to ridicule it, and it was a timely one in a society as artificial and corrupt at the top as that of eighteenth century France. As for the gentle guidance that Emile receives instead of a regular schooling, it broadened the whole concept of education, even if by now we are suffering from an overdose of such methods.

To return to the *Confessions* themselves, they are a pretty sorry story. Born with strong, unstable emotions and an infinite capacity for self-deception, Rousseau was not favoured by circumstances. He lost his mother at birth, and his father seems to have soon stopped taking any genuine interest in him. At any rate, when Jean-Jacques ran away from Geneva his father made no serious attempt to find him and persuade him to return, apparently because in his son's absence the income from some property left by his first wife would revert to him. Sent to the curious Mme de Warens, then a recent convert, by the Catholic priest at Confignon, Rousseau soon made up his mind to change his religion, encouraged by the hint of material rewards. This episode casts as little credit on the local missionary methods at that time as on Rousseau's character or the quality of his Calvinist upbringing. Mme de Warens brought him up to be her lover; he clung to her until ousted by a new favourite, but did not deny himself friendships with other women at the same time. He went on falling in love with pathetic optimism until he was nearly fifty; it is with some relief that we at last read, apropos of Mme de Boufflers: 'But for this once I was sensible, and at fifty it was time' (p. 502). Rousseau was 'enslaved by the least mark of affection' (p. 484); as a result, his relations with the various society women who took him up follow a pattern that grows tiresome: introduction, gratitude, close friendship, rupture—with poor Jean-Jacques the injured party, of course. It is hopeless to try to decide the rights and wrongs of these affairs; we are given no facts, only Rousseau's feelings at the time. For the *Confessions* are above all the loving tale of Rousseau's feelings; that is their strength and, in the long run, their tedious weakness.

Mr Cohen's translation manages skilfully to echo the general tone of Rousseau's writing without ever reminding us that we are reading a translation, which is no mean feat. The introduction is concise and judicious.

J. R. FOSTER

The Legacy by Michael Mason. Pp. 23 (Sheed and Ward) 2s. 6d.

THERE, but for the grace of God . . . This poem is the record of a very frightening temptation. Its setting is the 'uncertain hour' of night when

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

speculation often takes a curious turn, freed from the pressure of wakeful reality and invested with the 'transient virtuosity of dreams'. Readers of Eliot will perhaps recall:

'Between midnight and dawn when the past is all deception,
The future futureless, before the morning watch
When time stops and time is never ending:'

Although irresponsible, this kind of speculation has a certain direction and consistency. We cut all our normal links with reality, a reality wider than ourselves, and seek for something in the thus isolated self. A still small voice (the original still small voice, be it noted, not what the preacher has made of it) invites us to find meaning precisely by cutting ourselves off from everything that is, normally, our source for meaning. The proffered 'meaning' fascinates. Does not everything I meet in normal life leave out myself? The persons with whom I communicate, the books I read, the ideas which I consider, do they not all bypass and leave untouched, unexplained, my individual reality? And then (to broaden the enquiry) do not the most significant modern trends suggest that we are on the verge of a new discovery of man in himself, subsisting at last without the prop of those big ideas, religious ideas, by which our forefathers expressed man's position in a total unified scheme? The individual dream and the 'modern' myth are inseparable, and they are blended throughout this remarkable poem.

The poem is unequal, certainly, but the imagery relating to the sense of privacy is intensely realized, and this is the backbone of the poem.

'Alone as on a summer's night to lie
Still in the darkness, still in the darkness of Egypt
Shrunk in the dusty royalty of the self, withered
Flowers at the feet, embalmed in consciousness,
And bandaged in the spiral of becoming,
The tomb's entrance choked with fallen rubbish:'

The answering nothingness is powerfully evoked:

'When answer comes there none, save
The fitful pattering of dry leaves, like rain;
The restless mutter of an electric train.'

Again:

'escape from this little room
Can only lead through crowded streets by day
(deserted perspectives watched by the eyes of statues)
To end again always in a little room
At nightfall, when the company must leave
And one is alone, with whatever one is alone with.'

And so the stage is set, and the macabre exploration proceeds in search of the pure self

'to which the skullsearing
Wilderness of triviality with all its bonebright horror
Is but a foil, necessarily glittering.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Come closer, and I will tell you a mystery; I'll place within
The chamber of your mind that enigmatic guest
The unrecognized meaning. Listen. They tell me
The lunatic, in primitive communities
Is often held as sacred . . .

Again:

'This Middle Kingdom
Of darkness and silence is only conquered by its prisoner.
*I bricked in
With my own hands, the burial shaft.'*

The tempo quickens:

'Involved in the labour of the meaningless
Struggling to be delivered of a
Meaning . . . yet even in these words here's treachery!
Within the very Kremlin of integrity
The deviationist! Ho, let the doors be barred!
Now, hunt it down
— deliberately, as one who passes time, controlling
The heart's quickening, indecipherable alarm beat.
There's only one way for it; you must run your hands
Slowly, in the closeness of this darkness,
Over the very faces of the mind's unseen guests.'

The world of childhood is beautifully evoked:

'The fogshrouded phantasmagoria of rainstarred lights
Through the car window on December nights'

only to be placed irrevocably beyond this isolated present of pure self.
Then we are left with

'Vision turned upon itself like a sleeve drawn inward.'

The climax, the final asphyxiating 'revelation', must be quoted in full:

'Golden as scalding iron in the eyeball,
Black as darkness in the collapsing pitshaft,
Raw as steel's edge to the dividing tendon,
Blue as putrefaction; actual, endless
And intimate beyond all intercourse,
Rising suddenly to living presence
In the darkness of the bedroom when the rising
Hysteria of the heartbeat cannot wake you
Nor the soundless scream call any help to free you:
As now when you find that you cannot let go of this partner
And must remain alone in this dream for ever
In an unpassing moment when you would welcome
All the very terrors that the horrorstruck explorer
Never expected to see.
*For after all manifestation
Follows the formlessness whose lair lies under evil'.*

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

I think many will recognize in these lines the accents of a familiar temptation: that of surrendering to what may be called the mystery of this world, hideous parody of the mystery of God. Modern literature is full of it. In this awful privacy, the only cry for help is that which God himself elicits in the self-pinioned soul. With this miraculous release the poem concludes.

A note at the beginning explains the poem's title. 'In 1456 François Villon wrote a poem entitled *Les Lais* in which he bequeathed a great many things which didn't belong to him to people who wouldn't have wanted them anyway.' The point is that the author is leaving to us, by a pseudo-testament, the pseudo-self which he created. It is not his, and we do not want it. And yet it has something for us, this

'Fluttering harlequin
Scarecrow, upon a bare
Hillside to stand
Bare, for a portent, this
Alter ego of discarded words
Marking, alone before
The turning tide of light
A point of no return; frontier, to separate
Two dimensions of silence
As with a hairline.'

To explain exactly what this is would be to bypass the poetic medium which, alone, can clarify the symbol of the pseudo-testament. The symbol is potent, and the poem was worth writing. DOM SEBASTIAN MOORE

COMMENTARY

FRENCH REVIEWS

AFTER fifty years of existence *Le Bulletin des Missions*, published by the Abbey of St André, Bruges, has been merged with a journal of similar aims, *Rythmes du Monde*, published till now in Paris. From now on *Rythmes du Monde*, with the sub-title *Le Bulletin des Missions*, will be published from both places, with its headquarters in Belgium.

The change in title is significant of a change in approach to missionary problems which has been spreading throughout the Church under the influence of Cardinal Costantini at the head of *Propaganda*. The kind of approach which has been recommended for so long by such a theologian as Père Charles, S.J., of Louvain, is beginning to be put into practice. The needs were put bluntly at a Catholic People's Week in England last year on 'The Pope and Africa'. The assistant curator of ethnology at the British Museum, William Fagg, stated that he considered all missionaries should go out, to study, in a spirit of humility, the religions of the people whom they are to convert, before attempting any evangelization. This is no more, in essence, than the instructions given to St Augustine when Gregory the Great sent him to England. But to-day, they involve highly complex studies, and great subtlety and sympathy in the first human approaches.

In the first of its new series *Les Rythmes du Monde* has amongst other articles: *Hymnes Eucharistiques Ethiopiennes* by Professor B. Velat; *Le Caodaisme* by Pierre Rondot; and *La Conférence de Lund* by M. Villain. To conclude its fifty years a final jubilee number of *Le Bulletin des Missions* has been issued. Père Jean Daniélou writes on *Le Christianisme et les Civilisations*, which may be taken as something of a send-off for the new beginning as well as a conclusion to the fifty years work. This article is also reprinted in *Essai sur le Mystère de l'histoire* which is being noticed in an article review in the next number of the DOWNSIDE REVIEW.

A new French Catholic review is: *L'Actualité religieuse dans le monde* (31 Boulevard de Latour-Mauberg, Paris 7e). It promises very well so far. One of its aims is to give accurate information about the Church in readable form. In one of the issues to hand it is instructive to read of the numbers of Cistercians of the two observances, and their distribution. In England, Ireland and Scotland, there are 530. Only France and the United States have more. In another issue, numbers of the members of *Mission de France* are given: about 350 priests and 150 seminarists; a conclusion is made that its methods have become firmly established in the Church in France.

J.T.

THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

GERMAN REVIEWS

IN a careful and critical review of Bishop Suenens' work on the theology of the Legion of Mary Apostolate, now translated into German, Fr Karl Rahner gives several examples of misleading exaggerations of Mary's part in the scheme of Redemption. It is not a question of definite error, but of language which is calculated to give an erroneous impression. In the very text of the Legionary's promise, he points out, are the words: 'she alone administers and distributes all thy graces, to whom she will, when she will and in what measure she will'. Perhaps the 'alone' must be understood as under the direction of the Holy Spirit who is addressed in this prayer, but 'Is the sentence — without interpretations and qualifications too remote to mention here — compatible with the sovereign, unsearchable will of God, in the last resort outside the influence of any one, even of Mary. He it is who alone distributes graces as He will, to whom and in what measure He will'. His main point, he repeats, is that the language in this book ought to be not only dogmatically correct — which it is, with the qualifications the trained theologian can introduce — but educationally and 'kerygmatically' correct. By 'union with Mary' the author seems to demand much more than the loving and devout acceptance of her relation to the Christian which has been assigned by God, apparently expecting her 'active presence' in us to render all our good works as perfect as her own : a kind of imputation or substitution is implied. The review appears in the second issue of *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* for 1953.

The theological development of Marian devotion is illustrated in the first of two articles by Fr Heinrich Weisweiler in Heft III of *Scholastik*, 1953, on the Western Church's thought on Mary under the influence of Chalcedon. The clear teaching of the Council on the two natures in Christ deepened appreciation of her role both as Mother of God and as a tender human mother of a human child. Out of this development emerged the art of the Middle Ages with its emphasis on the humanity of Christ and the corresponding expression of the mother's love. E.Q.

CHRISTIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

A COPY of the Princeton Index of Christian Art, compiled by the Department of Art and Archaeology at Princeton University, was presented last summer by Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, to the Vatican Library. In conjunction with the Index the Cardinal also established a Bibliographical Centre to provide bibliographical information for scholars working in Rome. Both the Index and the Centre have been housed in a new section of the Vatican Library and located at the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology.

The Princeton Index is a scientifically ordered collection of photographs, descriptions and bibliographical references, filed under subject headings,

COMMENTARY

of all the published works of Christian art which can be dated prior to the year 1400. After nearly thirty years of labour, the Index to-day contains some 500,000 cards and 100,000 photographs, and it is continually being rechecked and brought up-to-date. Scholars have for many years recognized the Index, although still uncompleted, as an indispensable tool for research in the field of Christian iconography and related fields.

The difficulty encountered by any one historian in assembling sufficient material to prove his thesis effectively has been one of the factors limiting the value of the science of iconography as an aid in historical investigation. The Princeton Index grew out of an evident need to assemble all the representations of subjects within a vast but clearly defined field in such a way that comprehensive comparison would be possible.

The Bibliographical Centre was set up not merely to aid scholars consulting the Index itself; it is also meant to serve as a facility for bibliographical co-operation between the great libraries of Europe. Thus, to date eighty per cent of the some 5,000 citations employed by the Index have been located in thirty-seven libraries in Rome and elsewhere on the continent. The Centre, working with the Union of Foreign Academies in Rome, also maintains a union catalogue of periodicals available in the libraries of these foreign academies, and in the city's larger libraries. Also a copy of the Union Catalogue of Theological Source Materials, which is being compiled at St Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, New York, has been presented by Cardinal Spellman to the Centre. It will be the purpose of this copy to locate in the main Roman libraries theological works originally published prior to 1800.

Plans are being studied at present by the Union of Foreign Academies and the Centre to set up a union catalogue of classical and medieval source materials, which will locate these sources in the major libraries of Rome and Florence.

Under the direction of Mgr Luciano DeBruyne, Director of the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology, the Index and the Bibliographical Centre are open for consultation both mornings and afternoons on all weekdays, except Saturday. For further information concerning the Index and the Centre those interested are requested to write to the Rev. Guy Ferrari, o.s.b., Curator, Via Napoleone III,1, Rome, Italy.

DOWNSIDE NEWS

ORDINATIONS were held on Sunday, 12th July. DD. Bede Maitland and Cyprian Stockford were raised to the priesthood, DD. Charles Hallinan, Hugh O'Neill, Bernard Moss and Dominic Gaisford to the diaconate.

DOM CHRISTOPHER LEYNE, having started his training at the Chelsea School of Art, has returned to Downside and takes up the post of Art master in the school.

THE making of vestments has been for many years one of Downside's activities. It has never had the publicity which tends nowadays to be attached to monastic crafts — we were not, for instance, represented at the recent Vocations Exhibition at Olympia. It goes by a name that has obviously not been thought out with a view to the brochure and whatnot. The term 'Vestment Department' is a description casually acquired as a convenient way of talking about the work and since maintained from force of habit — for what publicity-manager could have tolerated the analogy with 'Toy Department' etc.? In commendable disregard of such considerations the work has been proceeding for the best part of half a century. Three juniors are now employed on the three cloth looms and two braid looms, and the tireless sacristy staff always have their hands full — Miss Jones has been here longer than most of the present community. Recent achievements have been the complete fitting-out of our new church at Liverpool and of the new church of Christ the King at Filwood Park, near Bristol. It is to be regretted that the greater part of the work is not for our own church, but it seems that we have to accept, even here, the stern necessities of an age of production for export.

WE have just enjoyed a notable addition to our library at the hands of Mr J. B. L. Tolhurst. The works having not yet been catalogued, it is impossible to list them here in detail, but we cannot defer, until this is possible, the expression of our gratitude to the donor. With the books, which are mostly liturgical, goes a fine collection of microfilms, a complete outfit for half-plate photography, and an enlarger for microfilms.

As we go to press, we learn, with great sorrow, of the death of Dom Stephen Rawlinson, and it is with added regret that we defer our full appreciation of his life and work to the next number of the Review.

HAGUE

AND SON

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CONTENTS

'Sobornost' or Papacy—III : *Fr G. Dejaifve, S.J.*

Concelebration of the Holy Eucharist in East and West—I :

Fr George Brianchianinoff

Reflections on the Unity Pilgrimage to Rome : *Dom Columba Cary-Elwes*

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QUICK FROZEN
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Haven Fisheries
LTD

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8278 Fleetwood

Telegrams

"Haven" Grimsby

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Capital subscribed . £2,042,471

Capital paid up . £2,042,471

GUARDIAN Assurance Co. Ltd.

ESTABLISHED 1821

Head Office :

68 KING WILLIAM STREET
LONDON, E.C.4

Branches and Agents throughout the World

CHAIRMAN :

THE RT. HON. LORD BLACKFORD, D.S.O., D.L., J.P.

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : STANLEY J. ADAMS, ESQ.

VICE-CHAIRMAN : SIR ALEXANDER AIKMAN, C.I.E.

GENERAL MANAGER : F. R. NORTON, F.I.A.

THE COMPANY

*transacts all the principal classes of
Insurance Business
and acts as Trustee and Executor*

TOTAL INCOME : £16,191,000

TOTAL FUNDS : £42,793,000